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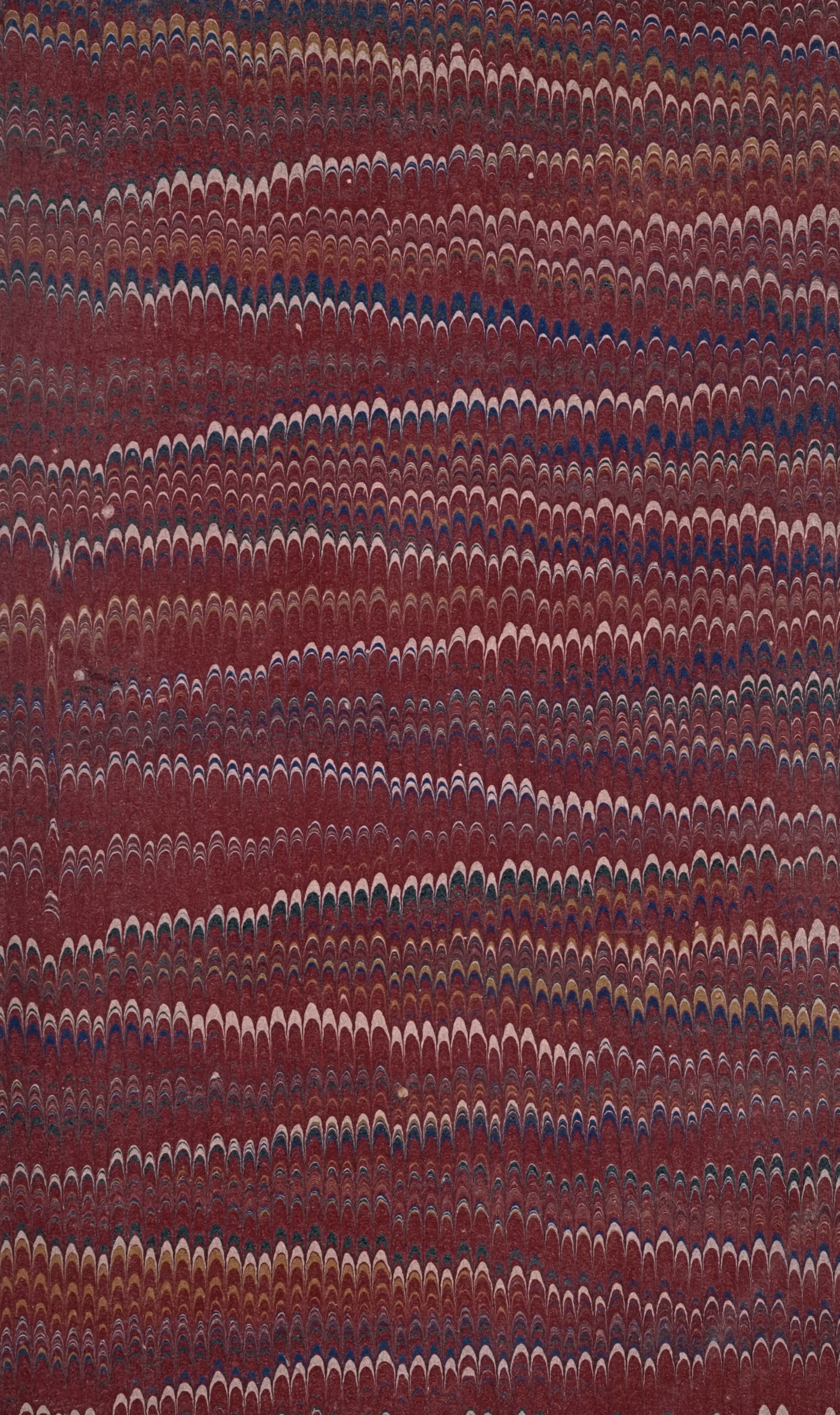

Kate Felton

KATE FELTON;

OR,

A PEEP AT REALITIES.

BY AN AMERICAN LADY.

Mrs. Maria D. Weston

" As the rose breatheth sweetness from its own nature, so the heart of a benevolent man produceth good works."

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NOTE TO THE READER.

With a feeling of good-will towards mankind generally, and especially towards the citizens of her endeared country, the writer of this work presents it to a generous public. She is encouraged to hope that it will be regarded as kindly by the reading community as have been her former productions, which, from time to time, have been laid before the book-loving multitude in our beloved land.

The Author.

New England, July, 1859.

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KATE FELTON;

OR,

A PEEP AT REALITIES.

CHAPTER I.

READY FOR AND STARTING UPON A JOURNEY.

"MOTHER, I love you so well that I wish to be rid of your society during the remainder of this evening. You look very weary indeed; and, unless you retire now and rest during the night, you will be unfit to encounter the fatigue of to-morrow."

This was said pleasantly and affectionately by a young lady to her mother, whose health was extremely delicate. As she said this, she approached her, and, tenderly kissing her, offered her arm for a support, saying, —

"Come, my dear mamma, you know I am very decided; so it will be useless for you to oppose my plans."

Her mother smiled, and, rising from her chair, remarked in a gentle tone, —

"You shall have your own way about me, Kate: I think it best for me to retire early to-night; and I hope you will soon follow me, for you are very much worn, and need rest as much as I do."

Mrs. Felton then retired to her sleeping apartment, leaving the care of little matters yet to be attended to, to her daughter. Every thing was soon arranged to Kate's satisfaction. She then seated herself in the room where her mother generally sat. She wished to take breath, and a bird's-eye view of things as they are. It was a neat, cosy little room where Kate sat; dear, very dear to her by association. There she had played in her infancy, there she had been dandled upon her father's knee. That parent was now sleeping in the dust; she felt the need of his strong arm to lean upon never more than now. Memory was very busy. In fancy she beheld his loved form, and she sighed as she thought how lonely her mother and herself had felt since he had gone. Her tears were starting unbidden; but she wiped them hastily away, for she heard a gentle rap at the door. She arose and opened the door to admit her dearest friend, Mary Winthrop. They met as only friends can meet, — ever pleased and satisfied with each other's society. They met and sat down together on this last evening of Kate's present stay in her native town, to enjoy the present, not to borrow trouble for future hours.

"You are alone, Kate," said Mary; "I am glad, — selfish enough, too, to hope you will not receive another call during this evening. I want you all to myself, Kate."

"I expect you will have it so," replied her friend. "Mother has gone to her chamber for the night; most of our friends have taken their leave of us; your friend Kate was sitting down just now to take counsel of her own wayward heart, which would have led her wrong, had you not come to rescue her. Don't show your love

for me, Mary, by making our parting painful. It is unkind to do so. We must part: but hope for me points her fairy finger to a period, a pleasant period, not very far distant, when we shall be reunited on earth; if not (and there is nothing certain here), we can, and I trust we shall, meet in a happier land."

"You are ever hopeful, Kate," said her friend; "I will not make it hard for you to do your duty. I know you would choose to remain here, but our parting shall not be a sad one if I can help it. The only thing I dislike about your plan is the situation of the home to which you are going."

"Where would you have it be, Mary? It is just where mother may enjoy firmer health; and, even if it were farther than it is from our loved New England, I would not shrink from travelling the distance for her sake."

"It is not the distance I complain of, Kate. If you were going to Italy's sunny shores, I would be satisfied; I should not feel it so great a drawback upon my comfort, as to think you are in the land where slavery is nurtured."

"Don't lay this to heart; I shall not let you. You will not love me less because my home for a time is to be at the South, will you, Mary? I shall be your friend still."

"But you will change, Kate; I am afraid of this. You may marry there too, and then we should be indeed separated."

"Not a bit of that, Mary," replied Kate. "You believe I love you now; be content with that for the present. Time will show what the future has in store for us, full fast enough too. If I turn slave-driver, as your fears seem to imply you think I shall, it will do to grieve when the fact is proved."

"I don't think you will become a slave-driver, Kate; but I do fear that you will learn to regard slavery as a trifling evil."

"We know not, Mary, what we shall do until we are tried."

"I hate to have you tried, Kate; to have your tongue silenced, by conventional rules, upon a subject that you have always freely discussed."

"I don't expect nor intend to be trammelled in any way," replied the lovely girl, looking at her friend with a countenance full of good humor. "I shall express my sentiments freely, as I have ever done. I expect others to do the same by me, and I shall ask them to be frank with me. I love my whole country; the North, South, East, and the mighty West. I mean, too, that the people inhabiting each of these regions shall love me as far as they know me."

"I don't believe the people of the South will love you very much, Kate, unless you change your sentiments," said Mary, roguishly.

"I do," responded the other quickly; "I shall make them in spite of themselves."

"You are a strange girl; what does you brother think of your independent manner?"

"Oh! he gets along with it, he says, because it is I; you know that some people must be tolerated. I expect he thinks I am of that class. You remember brother John, don't you, Mary?"

"Yes, I remember him. I have seen him several times, yet only once since his marriage. Don't you wish, Kate, he had taken a northern lady for a wife, and lived here near you?"

"No," answered the other; "it is best as it is."

"It is pleasanter for your mother just now, that he lives in a warm climate," said Mary abstractedly.

"It is best on other accounts," said Kate.

"Why, do explain yourself; I can't see any advantage arising from such a connection."

"Then you don't put on the right spectacles to look through."

"Then I need specs, do I, to see them?"

"Certainly," said Kate, playfully. "Your eyes are all blurred over with prejudice; you can't see at all clearly without the help afforded the moral vision through the gospel."

"I understand you in part, but not wholly," replied Mary.

"Why," said Kate, "if all obeyed the precepts of the gospel of our Saviour, should we not feel that we belonged to one great family; should we not love our brother as ourselves?"

"What a benevolent heart you possess, my dear friend! I wish I felt as you do."

"That is a very poor wish, Mary; I wish that you and I both had much more benevolence than either ever exercised or cherished. We must press onward, Mary, and never feel satisfied with any attainment yet made."

"Kate, I almost wish I was going to the South with you."

"If I remain there you must come," said Kate; "though I don't know exactly what might be the effect of conventional rules," she added somewhat mischievously.

"Oh, don't!" said Mary; "I was thinking I should like to try and see if I could be an independent Christian."

"Why not try now, and always, wherever you are? there is no time like the present. We don't labor to improve it half enough, at least I don't."

"Your gifts are different from mine, Kate; you can speak when I should not know what to say. Besides, I am unfortunate in giving offence. I do not make myself clearly understood."

"I understand you, Mary. You must not excuse yourself from duty that is not pleasant, but make your influence for good felt as far as you may. We cannot be neutral; we cannot stand still. We are retrograding or advancing always."

Mary sighed.

"I shall lose a counsellor when you go."

"You will have a better Friend left near you."

"That is true; still you are my best earthly friend, Kate. I have been an orphan ever since my remembrance; and your love, as it has ever been manifested towards me, is among the earliest and sweetest recollections of my childhood."

"I love to think you have reciprocated the affection I have cherished towards you; it will be a darling thought to carry to my southern home."

"I don't love to think of your having a home so far from me."

"Don't think of it; we shall be together in spirit every day."

It was late ere these friends retired to rest. They chatted long. Mary spent the night with Kate, that she

might see her friends start upon their journey early in the morning. Mrs. Felton arose very early, feeling greatly refreshed by the quiet rest she had enjoyed. Kate had rested somewhat more than Mary; but, though sad at heart, Mary had a pleasant smile upon her face. For her friend's sake, she would be cheerful. She accompanied them to the depot, and remained until the cars were ready to start. Tears filled the eyes of the trio, but they were not allowed to flow. Other friends came to take a parting look, and give a parting hand to both mother and daughter.

When the moment arrived for parting, an affectionate pressure of the hand, and a hurried injunction to write soon, were all that passed between Kate and her friend Mary.

CHAPTER II.

JOURNEYINGS. — TWO OPPOSITES MEET.

THE iron horse that was to convey our friends a portion of their way sped rapidly over the track. It was not pleasant for Mrs. Felton to sit in a car crowded with persons of every character and description. Kate felt this, and strove to interest her, and divert her mind from disagreeables by placing something pleasant before her. Possessing a keen sense of the ludicrous herself, she found quite enough to beguile the tediousness of the way in her fellow-travellers. It seemed to her that circumstances had contrived to throw more in her way that was laughable on that morning than ever before. Some, however, would have fretted and frowned and fidgetted, or done any thing but smile and feel amused at what pleased Kate. After sitting for a time silently observing what was passing around her, she asked her mother in a low tone if she did not like to take such a peep at the world once in a while, so as to see things a little as they are.

"I like to see the brightest part of it, Kate," replied Mrs. Felton; "not those portions that are darkened by arrogance and pride, — I don't even like to think of those."

"Well," said Kate, "we've a specimen of what you would avoid in close proximity to us, you see."

"I am but too well aware of that," responded her mother.

"Mother, do you suppose that haughty lady who appears to be the mother of that little girl is really afraid that the child who sits near her will contaminate her darling if their clothes happened to touch?"

"She acts as if she thought so, certainly," said Mrs. Felton; "just study her countenance."

"I have for some time," said Kate; "but I can see but little expression, none in fact but hauteur admirably set off with self-complacency. The little girl she is so afraid of does not appear to understand her at all; see how wonderingly the child regards her ladyship, — or *being-ship* I ought to say, for such an one as she should not be called a lady. I am going to speak to this plainly dressed child now; she looks sad, and I should like to know something about her."

One of the passengers had just moved, so Kate could sit down beside the little girl; she did so, and with a smile of sympathy and kindness said to her, —

"My dear, I have not seen you speak to any one since you came into the car; haven't you any friends with you?"

"No, ma'am."

"Then you must feel lonesome," said Kate, "don't you?"

"Yes, ma'am, I have been thinking that it was very lonesome here among all these people, and I wished that little girl would only just speak to me," — glancing at the said child at the moment.

On hearing this, the little girl's mother looked unutterable things, but did not speak. The child went on, —

"I am going to see my father at the next stopping

place, and he is going to Albany with me. I hope you will stay in the car till father gets in," she added with rather a quizzical expression of countenance.

"I expect I shall, and much longer than that," answered Kate; "but why do you wish it?"

"Oh! because," — and the child hesitated and looked confused.

"Don't be afraid to speak, dear; say just what you wish to."

The little girl looked up, smiled, and said in a low tone of voice, —

"I feel as if you cared for me, although you do not know me."

"I do care for you, my child; and I should have spoken to you before, only I could not then get near enough."

"You are very good to me," she answered; "and you are a lady, too. Aunt Abby told me to be very quiet, for I was not dressed well enough to be noticed by any but good people."

"What is the matter with your dress, dear? I am sure it is neat and becoming."

"But auntie said it wasn't rich, — it would show people that my father was poor."

"What if he is? He is a good father, isn't he?"

"O yes, ma'am, a dear good father; I love him dearly. I did my mamma, too, when she was here; but she is dead now."

The child's lip quivered. She could hardly articulate the last words ere the tears streamed down her cheeks. Kate was moved almost to tears herself. She put her arm affectionately around her little friend, and with her other

hand took from her travelling basket some confectionery and gave her. She then offered some to the daughter of the haughty lady who sat next to her *protégé*. The little girl looked at her mother for leave to take it, and then accepted it. Kate had been much amused by observing that lady's scrutinizing glances at herself, after she sat down near her. It was plain she was satisfied that Kate was a lady: but it was not as plain that she felt rebuked for the proud, unchristian airs she had assumed towards that unprotected child; for she had neither head nor heart enough to feel this. She satisfied herself, however, that Kate's dress and manners gave her a passport to class number one. "She belongs to my set," thought she; "I will take some notice of that child, since she is so free with her." And the proud one vouchsafed to ask the little one if she was tired.

"No, ma'am, not now," replied the little girl, modestly, and then turned her head in another direction, as if fearful she might speak to her again. Like all children, she was a shrewd observer of character; and she had felt, as well as seen, the difference between Kate and the woman of fashion. This was felt, too, by the person herself. Though Kate Felton was little more than twenty years of age, she was very dignified; and to dignity was added a modest independence, a straightforwardness of purpose and action, that seldom failed to insure her the respect of those she met, even upon a very short acquaintance. On this occasion, her fellow-traveller, who has more than once been alluded to, regarded her as a person worthy of notice, and began a conversation with her. At first, it was commonplace, but very soon became interesting to both

parties. Kate was a person calculated to draw out the character of even the most reserved. In one sense of the word she was non-committal; still she was frank-hearted and ingenuous, never allowing herself to cherish sentiments she might not on some occasion express with propriety.

Her new acquaintance felt no little curiosity to learn something of her history. Thus far she had seemed a puzzle to her. Was she rich? married or single? where was she going? — were questions that arose in the lady's mind. That she was handsome was a self-evident fact. That she was richly dressed, and accustomed to such dress, was also evident. Why Kate seemed so interested in a plainly dressed, lonely child, she could not discover. No wonder! She had not the key to this: she needed a heart. On learning that Kate and her mother were on their way to Virginia, where they were to spend the remainder of autumn and the approaching winter, she told Kate she envied her.

"Why," asked Kate, "don't you like the North as well?"

"On some accounts I do; yet one has the privilege of so many servants at the South, that it makes a residence there delightful."

"I cannot agree with you in that," Kate answered, hardly able to restrain her risibility. "I think we can have servants enough in dear New England to make life pleasant to any rational being. I don't admire a great retinue of servants."

"You are not in the habit of waiting upon yourself, I conclude?"

"Yes, I am; I often wait upon myself from choice, — not always. I have ever had it in my power to do as I chose."

"I never wish to do that for myself that I can have a servant do for me," was the reply.

"Then," observed Kate, rather dryly, "it is a mercy to yourself that your home is at the North."

Here the conversation was interrupted by the stopping of the cars, and the consequent egress and ingress of passengers. The little girl's father entered, much to the child's gratification. Kate thought he did indeed appear like a dear good father, as the child had said. The father and daughter had not met for a long time, and both found it difficult to control their feelings at seeing each other. The gentleman was the most successful of the two. It was sometime before the little girl could say much. She sat still, holding her father's hand; weeping very silently, though not sadly.

Kate had heard an individual say to him, just as he entered the cars, "Good bye, doctor!" so she concluded he was a physician; but a moment's study of his fine open face assured her that he did not belong to the class called quacks. His appearance showed him to be a person in straightened circumstances. His dress was scrupulously neat; but his coat was well-nigh threadbare, although made of fine cloth. He had the air and manners of a person used to good society, with which was mingled a shade of diffidence. Kate's thoughts were busy. She loved to study human nature. A different arrangement had been made, by the moving of several passengers, which brought Mrs. Felton, Kate, her little friend, the gentleman re-

ferred to, the fashionable lady and her daughter, into one neighborhood. The last-mentioned lady seemed annoyed at this state of things, nevertheless it must be endured. She regarded the threadbare gentleman with an expression of contempt.

"Now," thought she, "this pitiful-looking child will not receive any more of this lady's attention."

She was mistaken, however; for no sooner had the cars become quiet, than Kate congratulated the child upon meeting her father. Then, in a low whisper, she asked, —

"Whom should you thank, dear, for bringing your father and yourself together again?"

The little girl smiled, and, looking thoughtfully into the face of her friend, replied, —

"My mamma would say, God."

"I am glad, dear, that you remember so well what she used to say. Be sure and remember it always."

"I hope I shall," said the child, her eyes swimming in tears.

The father looked at his little girl as if he would know the cause of her emotion.

"Father," said she, "I was not lonely much of the way before you came in here; for this lady was very good to me."

At this Kate smiled; and the gentleman, bowing politely, expressed his gratitude for her kindness.

"I have done nothing to merit such an acknowledgment on your part," said Kate. "It was a pleasure to chat with your little daughter. I only regret, that, during the first part of our journey, we were separated by too great a

distance to admit of my speaking to her. I wished to, for I felt she was lonely."

"Some persons do not think as much of the feelings of others," replied the gentleman, with an expression of admiration in his countenance, as he looked at the interesting individual who had addressed him.

"I don't envy such their feelings," said Kate. "I think by far the greatest part of one's own happiness is derived from the thought that they are making others happy."

"Your own happiness, I should judge, was enhanced by doing good," responded the other. "Yet such cases are not common in the world; at least, I have found that selfishness has a wider sway than disinterested benevolence."

"The world has not yet learned to love its neighbor as itself," said Mrs. Felton, who had been wishing for a favorable opportunity to address the stranger.

His manly bearing, his broad, intellectual forehead, and high-toned moral expression, delighted her. A shade of sadness was blended with all this, that gave an additional interest to his appearance.

The gay woman of fashion did not see aught in this plainly dressed child of misfortune and genius to admire. She wondered at her fellow-travellers for compromising their dignity in such a manner. For aught they knew, she thought, there might be within hearing those whom they should hereafter meet in their own circle; and to think of having first been seen talking on familiar terms with such shabbiness, — she was not going to run any such risk, no, not she. So, if at any time while conversing he

had looked at her, as if expecting she might make some remark, she scornfully repulsed such rudeness. Why shouldn't she? — she belonged to the society of exclusives. It never for a moment occurred to her, that the good and great might wish to exclude her from *their* society, were it not for the apostolic injunction, "Be courteous." During a short pause which followed the remark of Mrs. Felton, our gay friend said to Kate, —

"I wonder why you think it a mercy that my home is not at the South."

Kate smiled, and answered, "Because I think you might expect too much of your servants."

The lady was evidently chagrined at this reply.

"Why do you think so?" asked she.

"Because you told me just now that you did not like to wait upon yourself; and, knowing that it is not good for any one in *health* to have all their wants attended to by others, I felt it would be a misfortune to you to be situated as you might be at the South."

"Would you have every one become a drudge?" inquired the lady, rather indignantly.

"Not by any means," replied Kate. "I don't love to see any one working over hard; and I don't love to know that any one is very tired."

"Either in spirit or body," said the gentleman, "I suppose."

"Neither," said Kate. "Spirit weariness has almost always my sympathy; — always, if produced in a laudable way."

"By exertion, I conclude you mean," said the other, with a meaning look."

"I do."

"Are you always busy yourself?" asked the lady traveller, turning to Kate.

"I generally try to be," replied she. "I don't feel satisfied with myself unless I am doing something."

"You rest sometimes, don't you?" asked the other.

"Certainly: that is doing something right. When one is weary, duty bids us pause then. But, to speak plainly, I do not like inertness and sloth. I love to have people employed, — it keeps them out of mischief."

"Yet," said the lady, "it is not necessary for all to labor. Some are born rich; of course, their circumstances preclude the necessity of doing any thing."

"I think differently. There is, there can be, no condition that precludes the necessity of labor. If a man has had a silver spoon put into his hand by his father, he can have no right to be content with just feeding himself with it. A person who does this, in my opinion, however full his coffers may be, is not entitled to one-half the respect that the industrious man may claim, however poor. I respect effort: it makes character."

"Do you respect a man more that is rich for having acquired his riches?"

"I do, — more than the indolent man, be he ever so rich."

"I presume," said the gentleman, addressing Kate, with an unassuming manner, "that you are far from despising that class who are striving to acquire wealth and distinction from a sense of duty."

"Indeed I am; even when such persons have only

planted their feet on the first round of the ladder that leads to influence and honor."

"The aspirant for goodness and greatness will not have obstacles thrown in his way by my daughter," said Mrs. Felton. "I trust she will ever fulfil her mission as a woman, to encourage and cheer onward all who have taken the first step in the glorious pathway to future usefulness. That path is a thorny one, sometimes; and its travellers often need the smiles of the virtuous, to keep them from despondency."

Our proud lady looked as if she had no sympathy with this subject, and with manifest pleasure hailed the sight of the city, to which the company were rapidly advancing. Here they were to separate.

"I shall be sorry when you leave us," said Kate's little pet to her, as they were nearing the depot at Greenbush; "for I feel as if I knew you."

"I thank you, my dear," replied Kate, with feeling. "Though we separate now, we may some time meet again.'

"I hope we shall," responded the child.

On leaving the cars, the haughty lady bowed stiffly to Mrs. Felton and Kate, without even deigning to glance at the wearer of the threadbare coat. Did these two opposites ever meet each other again? Perhaps they did. We shall know. Mrs. Felton and Kate parted with the stranger with feelings of great interest. The careworn, intelligent face of the gentleman could not be easily forgotten by either mother or daughter. Kate was fortunate enough to secure a small stateroom, for the accommodation of her mother and herself, on board the steamer that was to convey them to New York on the following day

The intervening time was pleasantly spent with some friends who resided in Albany. The following morning was gladdened by as bright a sunshine as ever gilded an October day. The air was somewhat cool, but not frosty; and our travellers took passage in the "Speedwell," amid the kind wishes and congratulations of friends; for many such they had. After the boat was well under way, they felt that to strangers they must now be indebted for all further attentions; as they had parted with all the friends they could expect to meet on their way. Mrs. Felton remarked to her daughter that she felt awkward and alone, having never travelled before without the escort of a gentleman.

"My dear mother," said Kate, "I do not feel in the least annoyed at the idea of being destitute of male attendance. Why, we are far from alone. I would not mind going to Europe in the same way. You will see that we shall get along extremely well. Do, mother, just come upon the deck a few moments, and enjoy the fine breeze and prospect. It will make you forget all the disagreeables of the way."

Taking her daughter's arm, Mrs. Felton left the saloon, and had hardly reached a seat upon the deck ere a gentleman approached her and proffered his hand. It was a former friend of Mr. Felton's. Mrs. Felton cordially responded to his friendly greeting; and, learning that his way lay in the same direction as her own, experienced a grateful sense of relief at the thought that herself and daughter would have a protector.

"Now, mother," said Kate, "you see how useless it was to waste your energies in anxiety about our situation. Here we are cared for providentially."

"I know it was needless; but somehow I could not but regret our loneliness."

"No great wonder, either," said Mr. Ryan, the friend they had just met. "Your health is poor, and your daughter young. It appears," continued he, turning to Kate, "that you were superior to any feeling of anxiety in the case."

"I am not timid," said Kate. "I can travel all alone if necessary. Still, I greatly prefer company, and sympathize with mother in the feelings of pleasure she manifests at finding a friend to whom she can speak. I am independent when independence is necessary, — not always from choice."

"I understand you," returned Mr. Ryan, with an appreciating smile.

The trip to New York was rather a pleasant one, though Kate confined herself to her mother's little room most of the time. Invalid as she was, she was good society; and her daughter's enjoyment of any thing was always doubled if shared with her. They gazed together out of the state-room window at the scenery on the banks of the river, as they glided along, until Mrs. Felton was weary. Kate sat by her couch, and conversed cheerfully for a while, — afterwards read aloud; and succeeded so well in interesting her mother that the lady could scarcely believe it past noon when the bell rang for dinner. In like manner the time sped on until they reached New York. As soon as they went upon deck, after the boat came to her moorings, Mr. Ryan appeared, and politely offered his services to relieve them of care; which offer was gladly accepted by Mrs. Felton and Kate. In a short time they were carried

to the Philadelphia depot, where they again took the cars to convey them to the place from whence they were to proceed onward, in a southerly direction, by land; as Mrs. Felton did not like to run the risk of sea-sickness, in going all the way by water. They found Mr. Ryan in their immediate neighborhood, when the cars started. He had attended to the purchase of tickets, checking the baggage, and all the little matters necessary in travelling. The cars were crowded; and their ride was endured, rather than enjoyed. This was the case during most of their journey. At length they exchanged the overloaded car and the steamer for a lumbering stage-coach.

Here Kate felt herself called upon to exert her powers of pleasing in her mother's behalf, who did not admire the jostling, sluggish movements of the old vehicle. It was otherwise with Kate. She loved that mode of travelling, in some respects, better than any other. It gave her an opportunity of seeing the country; and it was the first time she had had a glimpse of southern scenery in autumn, so she enjoyed it greatly. They had parted with Mr. Ryan when they started in the stage; but Mrs. Felton felt as if the greatest of their wayside trials were over, and Kate was as lively as a bird. Gaily she pointed out every thing of interest to her mother; for her vision took in every thing at a glance, and for a length of time she saw only the beautiful. Nature was wearing her most splendid robe. Some of its hues were perhaps too gorgeous; still, as a whole, it was beautiful. "This," thought Kate, "is the land of flowers;" but, just as she was indulging the thought, a contrast presented itself in long stretches of half barren, overworked land, that lay in their way.

"They need some of the nerve and muscle of New England in this region," said Kate to her mother. "There is want of energy, as well as skill, apparent here."

"It is plain to see a want of something here. The flowers are lovely, but grow with little help. It is not so with the products of the field. Man's brow must sweat if he would live on *good* bread."

"That is true," said a gentleman who occupied a seat in front of them. "He cannot throw his responsibilities upon others without loss. Here, where slave-labor supports all, we must put up with what we can have, which I really believe is more than we deserve."

"From God, or from the slaves, do you mean?" asked Kate, modestly.

"From both," replied he. "We are in a bad fix here, you may depend; for we feel our trouble, and yet cannot find a remedy."

"I believe there is a remedy near you, if you would but apply it."

"Do you mean that we ought to turn abolitionists?" interrogated the gentleman.

"I do not," said Kate. "I mean that you ought to turn Gospelists. A strict regard to the Golden Rule would free our country of much perplexity."

"Is the observance of this rule more desirable at the South than elsewhere, think you?"

"No, not a bit more. The North is in some respects more neglectful of it than this part of our land."

Finding that the ladies expected to spend the winter at Groveton, a place then only a few miles distant, and having learned the fact that they were near relatives of

the Hon. John Felton, a friend of his, the gentleman introduced himself to them as Mr. Easyside, a clerical personage, whom they would probably often meet at Mr. Felton's. Kate was not sorry to hear this; for she felt, when he left them, — as he did a mile or more north of Groveton — that she had not heard him say half enough upon the subject he had himself introduced. However, for her mother's sake, she was thankful when the stage stopped at a public house, a quarter of a mile distant from her brother's. A private carriage soon transported them the remainder of the way.

CHAPTER III.

THE ARRIVAL. — MORE CHARACTERS THAN ONE.

As they drew near the dwelling of Mr. Felton, they were observed by a slave, who communicated the fact to her master that strangers were approaching.

"Indeed!" said he, rising and going out upon the verandah. In another instant, he returned to the room he had left, where his wife was sitting, and said, in hurried accents, to her, "My mother and sister have arrived." His wife hastened with her husband to welcome these friends. They were expected near that time, though not confidently; and Mr. John Felton declared his faith could not take so long a stretch as to believe they would come at all.

"You have given us an agreeable surprise," said he. "If I had really thought you would come, I should have gone for you."

"Now," said Kate, "you must allow us the credit of having made a slight effort to see you in your own domicil. But we are forgetting that mother is feeble, and in need of rest."

"Oh! I must ask the pardon of both, this minute. I am so delighted at seeing you, that I had quite forgotten every thing else for the time."

His wife had not, however, as he now found by hearing himself addressed by a servant, who had been sent with a request that Mrs. Felton might be assisted up stairs to the chamber that had been made ready for her.

"I'll go up with you, mother," said her son, "and Kate may follow if she likes; but you must lean upon me," at the same time placing her arm upon his.

When they reached the chamber, which was a well aired, prettily furnished, pleasant room on the second floor, Mrs. Felton thanked him for his kindness, but confessed that for the present she was too weary to enjoy even the society of this darling son.

"I shall be a good boy, then, and go right down again, and keep quiet, until you have refreshed yourself with sleep; but stop! you must have some other refreshment first."

"I have seen to that," said his wife; and thereupon a slave entered, bearing a waiter upon which was a cup of tea, and something more substantial; of which Mrs. Felton, senior, partook with relish, and then, being left alone, soon fell asleep, and did not awake until evening. In the meantime, Kate, having fortified her stomach with a late dinner, was introduced to all the members of her brother's family. He was almost fifteen years her senior. Death had made sad ravages in the family of her parents during the years that had elapsed after his birth ere she was born. These two, the first and last born of her children, were all that were spared to cheer the widowhood of Mrs. Felton. John had three children: the two eldest were daughters, — one, Emma, who was fourteen; the other, Rose, eleven years of age; the youngest, a promising boy of nine years. The children welcomed their grandmother and aunt as heartily as did their parents. Little Frank said he knew he should love his aunt; and he was desirous of presenting all the house servants to her as soon as possible.

"I want you to see our Ruthy, auntie," the little fellow said, as soon as an opportunity offered for him to say as much, amid the constant chatter of glad voices that had taken themselves as far from the chamber of the invalid as they well could.

"And why do you wish me to see her, dear?"

"Oh! because I love her; and I think you can't help loving her too."

"I shall not try to help loving her or any one else, Frank, because it is a part of my mission to love people; but I want to see Ruthy, — may I go with you to find her?"

"Yes, ma'am," said the child delightedly; "she won't be hard to find; she is out in the kitchen."

"Well," said Kate, "we'll seek her there now."

Frank took hold of his aunt's hand, and led her across the yard into the first southern kitchen she had ever seen. Ruthy stood at the table ironing.

"This is my nurse," said Frank; "she has always taken care of me."

"And he is my good baby, missus," said the woman with a smile; "'t'aint 'tall hard for to do for him."

"I am very glad to hear you speak in such terms of my little nephew," said Kate; "it promises well for the children when they are kind to those who have the care of them."

"So it does for growd folks too, I'se thinking; you can see jist what sort of man or woman they is, if you only observes how they treats their people."

"That is one pretty fair test of character, I allow, uthv," said Kate; but do tell me how it is you manage

to get along with so few of the articles in your kitchen that we use at the North ?"

"La's me, missus ! no kind ob use to have so much trumpery round ; niggers don't want it. They does jist as well without."

"You seem happy here, Ruthy," said Kate, as she stood regarding her in something of a musing mood.

"Happy !" repeated the woman. "Yes, missus, I has a good deal to make me happy. I should allers be happy if my chillen was only with me, but they's a good ways off."

"How came that ?"

"Oh ! my ole massa died, and the people was all scattered about ; cause there was debts to be paid, and 'fairs to settle : somehow all my chillen was sold to go off but one. They let Lucy be sold with me, 'cause she was weakly like, and wouldn't fetch much. I s'pose I ought to be thankful for her, but sometimes my poor old heart aches when I thinks 'bout my other chillen. And then," continued she, "I can't sometimes help being afeared that Massa Felton will die, for it 'pears 'sif ebery ting is agin me all my life-time."

"Don't think so ; hope for better things. I am glad you like my brother."

"Massa Felton's your brudder, then ?"

"Yes, Ruthy."

"I'm sort of glad of it, 'cause somehow I tells by anybody's face if they is good ; and I hopes you's going to stay here."

"During the winter I expect to. But where is your daughter ?"

"She is in that little cabin out by the garden," said Frank, before the woman could speak. "Shall we go and see her?"

"We will just look in upon her for a moment if you wish."

Frank eagerly led the way; for he always liked to visit Lucy, who had won his childish affections by her faithfulness and devoted kindness. They found her looking very feeble, but cheerful, and busy with some light work, which she laid down at the entrance of her visitors.

"Auntie, this is Lucy," said Frank; "it will take some days for you to learn the names of all our people."

"Yet I shall learn them all," answered his aunt, "I dare say; for I intend to become acquainted with all that belong here."

"The field hands and all?" inquired Frank.

"Yes, certainly."

Lucy looked at Kate as if she would like to ask her the reason why; and Kate, anticipating her wish, told her, that, as she was to make one of Mr. Felton's family for some months, she would like to have it in her power to do something for the comfort and good of all his people. In order to do this, she must know them.

"This is the reason why I called upon you so soon. I heard your health was not firm, and I thought I could make your life more pleasant by a little attention."

"Thank you, missee; might know you's massa's sister widdout tellin'. I 'spects you'll come agin."

"I shall, Lucy; but we must not stop any longer now."

After a few more words of kindness and sympathy,

Kate, with Frank, returned to the house. Mrs. Felton had joined the family, feeling greatly refreshed by her nap; and a happier circle seldom gathered around a table than the one which surrounded Mr. John Felton's social board on that evening. During tea, the time was improved by enlivening and endearing conversation. The son was rejoiced at having his beloved mother, and no less dear sister, inmates of his home. His wife and children sympathized in his pleasurable emotions, which made gladness the presiding genius on the occasion."

"You have not told us yet how you came to leave your dear New England home," said Mr. Felton to his mother; "but I infer from your appearance that you came in search of health."

"Both pleasure and health I have come to seek, and feel pretty well satisfied already that I shall not seek in vain," replied she.

"It shall not be my fault if you do," answered her son, smiling.

"Nor mine," repeated his wife.

"Nor mine, nor mine, nor mine," echoed each of the children with animation.

"I feel grateful for your kindness and affection," said Mrs. Felton, with emotion. "Heaven never grants a greater or more welcome boon to parents than the ardent, unselfish devotion of their children."

"Our love for you is not purely unselfish, mother," said her son.

"No, certainly it is not," added his sister; "you have made us love you, mother. Our regard is founded upon something beside the fact that you gave us birth."

Day succeeded day rapidly and pleasantly to the family at Groveton, with little variety of circumstances or scenes, for two or three weeks. Kate during those weeks received one or two letters from Mary Winthrop: those were precious missives. These friends had never been so far distant from each other before, and they fully appreciated the privilege of communication afforded them by Uncle Sam. They almost fancied that for their sake he was unusually punctual in that part of the country where Kate was, for they had been warned of his unsteadiness in that direction. Kate found useful and agreeable employment for every day, — much, too, that combined both recreation and labor. She loved to stroll in company with her nieces around the plantation to enjoy the beauties of nature; the songs of the feathered tribe were ever delightful music to her ears, while even the tiniest flower spake in language cheering to her loving heart. A little grove about a half mile distant from her brother's house, composed mostly of small pine trees, was her favorite resort. Here she would seat herself, sometimes quite alone, to listen to the whispering wind among the green branches that spoke in soft cadence of the wondrous power of Him who created all things; while the pressure of her feet upon the soft carpet of foliage fallen from the pines, reminded her of the provision made by God for man's comfort. One morning, about a month after her arrival at Groveton, as she was sitting in this loved spot, while the girls had gone farther in pursuit of flowers, she was startled by a cry of distress at a little distance from her. She quickly arose, and went towards the place from whence the sound proceeded. It was not necessary, how-

ever, to proceed far. The sound that had fallen thus painfully upon her ear grew more and more distinct.

A girl, apparently about thirteen years of age, was running towards her ; pursuing, and close upon her, was a furious-looking man. The girl stopped, or was stopped by Kate, when she had reached her.

" What shall I do ? Oh ! what shall I do ? " cried the girl in an agony of feeling. " I can't go."

" Go where ? " asked Kate.

The man by this time had reached them, and halted a moment ; eyeing the poor child and Kate with an angry expression.

" Go where ? " repeated the questioner ; " stop crying and tell me."

" I don't know as it's any consarn o' yourn," said the man gruffly ; " a man's a right to do as he likes with his own child, I reckon."

" Don't be angry at my asking your daughter this question. I suppose from what you just said that you are her father, — are you not ? "

" Yes."

" Well, then, please tell me where you would have her go ? I don't wish to meddle unkindly with your affairs, — only, if possible, relieve the distress of this poor child."

The girl looked imploringly at Kate. The man frowned, and stood silently gazing upon the ground. Kate addressed the daughter again, —

" Where is it that you can't go ? "

The girl, encouraged by what Kate had said, ventured to speak, —

" Off with that dreadful man who wants to buy me."

Horror-struck at the thought of a parent's selling his own child, Kate looked all the consternation she felt at the miserable wretch before her, and asked him if he could think of doing such a thing.

"Yes," said he, doggedly; "I'm obleeged to do it to live."

"Why?"

"'Cause you see we're poor whites, — ain't nobody nor nothing. The niggers, though they be'd slaves, turn up their noses at us. We can't git work to 'arn a livin'. There ain't no place for us to be. We can't get any thing to eat half the time; and it's no sort of use tryin'. A slave-driver tuk a fancy to Suke, my gal here, and is going to give me thirty dollars for her. He says she'll be treated well. She's too pooty not to be."

"Have you any other children beside this daughter?" inquired Kate.

"Yes, I's got two more; and I tell my old woman it's no sort of use snivelling about Suke's going away when there's nothin' else to be done. Folks must live, ye see."

"Thirty dollars won't support you long," said Kate. "What would you do after that was gone?"

"Oh! just as we always has done, I 'spose; — get what little I can by ketching fish, and once in a while shooting birds, and gettin' a rabbit or so; go hungry the rest of the time, and always have folks kick at us, and try to git rid of us."

"If you could have employment provided for you, would you work every day in the week, for the sake of your family?" asked Kate.

"Yes, I would, every day, and Sundays too. I'd like to do something; but there ain't no chance for poor white folks here, — the slaves does all the work. But I mustn't stop here, — that man 'll be waiting for me. Come, Suke! You *shall* come back with me!"

The poor girl screamed, and drew close to the side of Kate, as if she expected protection.

"Come on, I say!" said the man, almost in a tone of desperation.

Kate placed herself between him and his child.

"Wait one moment, my friend," said she.

The man paused, and stood, for a moment, motionless.

"If I give you thirty dollars, will you let your daughter come and live with me?"

"With you!" responded the man. "Golly! yes, I guess I will! But you ain't in 'arnest, I guess."

"I am, indeed," replied Kate, gratified to find a latent spark of the father in the bosom of even this miserable being. "I will give you thirty dollars, if you will let her be mine to take care of."

"I will, sartain."

"Well, you must sign a paper, promising to give her to me. Will you do this?"

"I can't write, — I never larn't, you see."

"But you can make your mark, and that will answer. Will you do that?"

"Sartain I will."

"Where do you live?" asked Kate.

"'Taint far from here," answered the man. "Over in the woods yonder."

"I must see your family," said she. "But now I wish you to go with me for a few minutes. Have you been to breakfast?"

"No, nor to supper either. That's what I wanted money to git."

"I will see that you have some very soon," replied his new friend, "if you will go with me for a few minutes."

The fearful frown the man's face had hitherto worn began to pass away, as he followed Kate and his daughter — who walked by her side — towards the house of Mr. Felton. As they approached, Kate perceived several pairs of eyes at sundry doors and windows, regarding herself and company with looks of amusement. Ruthy was among the first to catch a glimpse of the trio, as they emerged from the grove. Lucy was with her mother, in the kitchen. At her call, she put down some apples she was paring, and ran to the window.

"Bress me!" said Ruthy. "I can't quite get 'quainted with Missey Kate, yet. Never seed the beat of her. I does bleve she has got some poor, dirty whites for comp'ny, dis ere mornin'. Ain't dat her, Lucy?"

"It is, I does bleve. Yes, dar, I sees her face."

"I wonders," said Ruthy, "what she is gwine to do wid dem ere critters."

"Noting wrong, modder, I knows. Missey Kate is too good for dat."

"She sartingly is good to eberybudy; but dis child's afeered now she's got 'posed upon by some ob der low white trash."

Kate entered the door of the kitchen, and requested Ruthy to get some victuals suitable for a breakfast for the

persons who followed her into the room. Ruthy did not hesitate to do as she was told; but brought some cold meat, with some bread and cookies, from the store-room, — to which *she* had free access, — and placed them upon the table. It was plain to perceive her equanimity was a little disturbed. Kate helped the girl to a portion, and gave some to the man, — telling him he had better hasten to sit down and satisfy his own appetite, and then carry some food to his wife and children. He did so, and ate as only a hungry man would eat; swallowing, at first, large mouthfuls without stopping to masticate them. Kate saw this, and kindly told him that was not the haste she desired him to make, but that he ought to take time to chew his food well before swallowing it, else it would hurt him; adding, "You shall have as much as you wish." He partook of the cookies with peculiar enjoyment.

"I never got hold of any thing better'n them are," said he.

Ruthy's muscles relaxed a little at this avowed appreciation of her cooking; and Kate said, in her usual gentle tone, —

"I am glad you like them. Eat as many as you wish."

His stomach in due time ceased its craving; and he arose from the table, and took in hand a basket full of provisions Ruthy had put up to be taken to his wife.

"I s'pose I'm to leave this gal here," said he, approaching the door, and casting a sort of sheepish look at Kate.

"Yes, certainly," replied she; "and here," going towards him, and handing him some money, "is two dollars of the thirty. I shall go to your place in a day or two,

and have it all settled. You must try to do better in future. I will see if you can be helped in any way."

He eagerly reached his hand for the money, which he tightly grasped, and departed.

"Help them ere critters! I guess, Missey Kate, you dun no what you talkin' 'bout."

"I believe I do," answered the young lady, smiling at Ruthy's mood.

"Can't think so," said Ruthy. "Why, them poor whites is the miserablest set o' critters in the world. Nobudy tries ter do any thing for um, cause ye sees it's no kind er use at all."

"Ruthy," said Kate seriously, yet mildly, "did you ever hear of a company of poor, helpless, sinful beings, entirely dependent upon a Friend for everything, who went so far in wickedness as to despise even this Friend? And yet many of these miserable offenders have become reconciled to this ill-treated Benefactor, and been pardoned by him; and, more than that, he has adopted them as his own children, and promised them a home for ever, in his own lovely mansion, — some of them he has already taken there. Say, Ruthy, did you ever hear of such a company?"

"La's me, deary! I knows what yer means. God has been dat good ter us, ter me more'n all the rest."

"Well then, tell me, ought we not to endeavor to be like Him who went about doing good?"

"Yes, deary, I knows we had."

"Did you ever try to win one of the souls of these poor despised whites to Jesus? Do you certainly know that they cannot be won by kindness?"

"No, no; I don't know. I has'nt tried dat are way; I feels 'shamed of myself, I do sartin. I'se all wrong, Missey Kate; and you're right, ye allers is."

"Oh no, Ruthy! far from it! but I want your sympathy in my efforts in behalf of that poor child," said she, pointing to the girl who sat in the doorway looking into the yard. "I have just rescued her from being sold, and devoted to the worst of purposes, to save her family from starvation."

"Oh, dat's orful!" said Ruthy; "dat's drefful to tink of. I will clar her up; 'spose dat's de first ting ter be did? I'se grad you did'nt done let her be sole."

"Yes, Ruthy. I'll go to the house, and see if I can get some clean clothes for her; and, while I am gone, do not let any of the servants say any thing unkind to the poor child."

"I'll try to keep um decent like; but t'll be kinder hard, for all de niggurs hate de poor whites dreffully. I seed Jim and Jake jist now round de corner thar, lookin' 'sif they was waitin' for a chance to poke fun at her, as I heered a Yankee peddler say t'other day."

"I would much rather they should poke their fun at me," said Kate, as she left the kitchen.

She met Jake after she had walked a few steps towards the house. She stopped, and bade him stop a minute too.

"Jake," said she, "what shall I give to you to pay you for being a good boy to me, and treating that poor girl in the kitchen kindly?"

"Does yer like her?" asked Jake, scratching his head at the moment.

"I like to have her here," replied Kate. "I have taken her to take care of, and I shall feel any little wrong done to her as done to me. I hope none of the servants will say any thing to her that is not right. I like you all, Jake, and mean to do any thing I can for your good; and I want you to do well for your own sake as well as mine. I will pay you for being kind to this girl, I say again."

"O missey Kate! don't now; yer'll kill me, yer will. You'se been ever so much kinder ter me now than I desarve. I will be a good boy ter you allers. I didn't know dat dat are gal was your'n, nor Jim did'nt nuther. We was gwine for to plague her a bit, but I'll tell him how she's your'n, and den nary one on us won't tach her. No, Missey Kate, dis sher chile don't need no more pay for to 'have his'self, I make sure. Ye's dun lots for us now. I haint forgot how ye'se got the knot out of my kite-string, nor how ye gin me a nice collar ter wear Sundays."

Kate smiled approvingly upon Jake.

"I have not done all I intend for you yet, Jake; and it will please me very much to have both Jim and yourself good boys always: remember to speak kindly to the poor white girl. Her name is Susan," said Kate, as she left him.

He answered, "Yes, Missey," with an awkward attempt at bowing and raising his cap.

When Kate entered the house she found the family in a very lively mood, prepared to rally her upon her rather long absence, and choice of company on her return walk.

"I am glad you are pleased with my doings," she laughingly replied. "Smiles are so much pleasanter than frowns that I do love dearly to meet them; but now I wish, sister Martha, that you would manifest your approbation of me by giving me something more substantial than smiles, though you may mingle as many of these rubies with your gift as you please."

"What will you have, Kate?"

"An entire suit of Emma's half-worn clothes."

"An entire suit! why, auntie, do you expect I shall be willing to let them go?" asked Emma.

"Yes, I doubt not but you are feeling willing this moment, my dear."

Emma laughed heartily.

"You are so droll, auntie," she replied; rising to go for the clothes as her mother bade her.

"It will be better to go yourself, Emma, than to send a servant; for the servants all feel any thing is too good for a poor white."

"Cannot something be done to change the popular sentiment in this respect?" asked Kate.

Mrs. John Felton paused a moment ere she replied; for this was a home question, and she was at a loss for an answer.

"I don't know," said she at length, "but possibly there might be; but these poor creatures are so degraded, it is not much use to try to do any thing to benefit them."

"Not more degraded than the heathen," responded Kate; "who will venture the assertion that it is useless to make efforts in their behalf?"

"I don't know but you are right, sister, in your opi-

nion; if so, many of us are wrong." Just then, Emma returned to the sitting-room, and displayed the suit of clothes she had selected.

"Will these do?" she asked, holding up several dresses, one of which was a light blue calico, and the other a dark brown gingham.

"I will have her put on the darkest one to begin with," said Kate. She then selected a suit proper for the girl out of the articles Emma had brought, remarking, —

"I shall remunerate you for these and every thing else I take of you for my *protégé*, her board not excepted."

"If you speak of such a thing, sister," said Mrs. John, "I shall certainly quarrel with you right away; use any thing you like for the poor thing, and I will watch your experiment with great interest I assure you."

Kate found, on returning to the kitchen, that the girl had not moved from the doorway where she had left her.

"Have you a plenty of warm water, Ruthy?" inquired she.

"Yes, missey," replied that personage; "an' some soap, combs, scissors, an' all dat yer will want, out dar in de wash-room, all ready."

Kate took Susan to the place designated; Ruthy followed, and wished to know if she could do any thing. Susan looked amazed, but did not speak. Her benefactress suggested to Ruth that it might be well for her to render some assistance, in order to secure a thorough ablution. This was done to the satisfaction even of Ruthy, who admitted that she should not be afraid to come in contact with the child any more; for she was

sure she was clean, — she had scrubbed her hard enough and long enough to clean any thing.

"Now let me cut her hair right orf," said the good-natured soul.

"I don't like to have it taken off if it can possibly be avoided," said Kate; "her head and hair can be cleansed without; besides, she is quite too tall a girl to wear short hair. I don't love to see it either."

"'Taint much 'count for her any way," said the other dryly.

"Take care, Ruthy, you are forgetting again."

"La's me! so I is, missey; but it's so nateral like, I can't hardly help it."

"Look at this hair," said Kate, as she raised a few locks of dark brown hair in her hand, that were hanging about Susan's shoulders; "it will be very handsome, and curly too, if it is properly cared for."

"My hair be handsome!" said Susan, looking surprised; "why I didn't know as how it could be."

"Only comb and brush it well and often," answered Kate; "my hair would not look better than yours if it was neglected as yours has been."

Susan was making some awkward attempts at clearing it from the tangles the while.

"Ruthy, perhaps you will succeed better than she does," said Kate; "if not, I will try my skill."

Ruthy, with a comical expression, took the comb from Susan's hand, and commenced combing the hair; after a few moments she exclaimed, —

"I never did get inter sich a scrape's this are afore! I'se done, — broke more'n half de teeth out ob de comb a'ready."

"Let me see what I can do," said Kate, taking the broken comb from the hand of the servant.

"Yer'll git things all ober yer," said Ruthy.

"I guess not," replied Kate; "the camphor I have soaked her hair in will not leave any thing to annoy any of us."

With a little care, and considerable patience, Kate contrived, with the aid of both brush and comb, to get Susan's long-neglected, but really beautiful hair, into quite a passable condition. She divided it, and made two long braids, which she confined upon the back of her head with brown ribbon, in a very tasteful manner. She afterwards assisted her to fasten the gingham dress, which fitted nicely, — she being about the size of Emma, the original owner. Some neat boots, and a white apron fitting as well, completed her dress. When the good old soul, whose services had helped bring about this state of things, looked on delighted, —

"Now who'd a thought," said she, "dat dat are darty lookin' thing would ha' changed so. It 'pears dat aint de same gal, no how."

"I am, though," said Susan; "but am I allers to be dressed up so?"

"I hope and expect," said Kate, "you will always keep yourself neat; but come, you must now go with me into the house."

Kate led her into the sitting-room; and the poor child hardly raised her eyes from the floor as her new friend introduced her to her mother, and brother's family. They all spoke kindly to her, and then Kate took her directly to her own room. As soon as Susan was out of hearing

of the company, they broke forth in exclamations of surprise and pleasure at the fine appearance of one whom they had all regarded as past improvement.

"I am sure," remarked Mrs. John, "she is a very pretty girl."

All concurred in this opinion; and Mrs. Felton said she had hardly expected to see so fine a form and face, although she was aware that Kate's judgment and taste was seldom at fault, and she had told her that the dirt concealed something pretty.

"Sister is good, kind, charitable, patient, — every thing that I want to be and can't," said Mrs. John.

"I believe," replied the mother, "she strives to imitate the example of One who, when upon earth, 'raised the fallen and chēered the faint.'"

"Girls," said Mrs. John Felton to her daughters, "I hope you will be like this aunt of yours. I should rejoice to see you follow her example."

Mrs. Felton felt thankful to find her daughter was appreciated, in a measure at least, by her son's family; she had been apprehensive, before she left her home at Rosefield, that Kate's straightforward, independent course might make her unpopular at Groveton. Now she was no longer anxious on that point; for Kate was fast winning her way to all hearts with which she came in contact. When Kate and Susan entered the former's room, the latter looked around at the furniture and arrangement of things with a bewildered air.

"Sit down," said Kate; "this is my room. And now I want you to tell me if you can sew any?"

"Not much," replied Susan; "we didn't never have much to sew, ye see."

"Say *you* instead of *ye*, Susan; try to remember that, will you?"

"Yees, marm."

"*Yes*," said Kate; "say that."

"Yes," responded Susan quickly.

"Be particular, my dear, and notice how those speak who are careful to pronounce their words aright."

"You do," said the child.

"I mean," answered Kate, "to speak and act so that it will be safe for you to follow my example. Can you read any?"

"No, marm."

"Would you like to learn?"

"Yes," said she promptly.

Kate smiled, and thought she would be an apt scholar, if she remembered other things as well as what she had told her in regard to pronunciation.

"I wish you to begin this very day," she said. "You must learn to read the Bible."

"What's that?" inquired Susan.

"Don't you know?"

"No, marm."

"It is the word of God, given us to teach the way to heaven and happiness to us."

"Who is God? I never knew; but I have heard the men say 'By G—d,' and ever so many other things."

"That is very wicked. God is a being who has always lived. He made every thing and everybody. He made you and I; and it is his wish that we should love to do right, and be happy for ever."

"Where is he?"

"Everywhere."

"Not here?"

"Yes, in this very room. He is a spirit. We cannot see him, but he can see us."

"Is he looking at us now?" asked the child, looking around the room.

"Yes, he sees us always."

"I don't like to think that."

"Why, Susan?"

"If I'm ugly, he'll see me, I guess."

"But you don't mean to be, do you? There is no need of that."

"Can I help it?"

"Yes;—ask God to help you, and then you can."

"How shall I ask him?"

"You must pray to him."

"What's that? I dun' no."

"Say *don't know*, Susan."

"Don't know," she repeated.

"It is to ask him to do for us what we want."

"Will you show me how?"

"I will," said Kate; for her heart yearned over this poor home heathen.

She instructed Susan to kneel down by her side, as she knelt by the sofa, and offered prayer in "the simplest form of speech." She uttered not one word that was not plainly understood by the ignorant child. When they arose, Susan remarked that "it 'peared sort o' queer to talk to any body you couldn't see; but, as the good lady did it, she thought it must be right."

Kate then commenced teaching her the alphabet, and

soon perceived that the task of instructing her pupil would be far from unpleasant. She had a very retentive memory, and was eager to learn. She took hold of the needle rather clumsily, at first, but soon found it easy to take small stitches, as directed by her instructress.

"I shall love you, I know I shall," said she to Kate; "you speak so pleasant, and say *dear* to me."

"I mean to be kind to you; and I hope you will always try to do right."

"He will know it, if I don't, won't he?"

"Yes. Try to please God, and then you will do as I wish."

Kate devoted most of the afternoon to the instruction of her *protégé* in various little matters very necessary for her to know, but of which she was wofully ignorant. She felt herself repaid for any sacrifice she made by Susan's willingness to do as she wished. Leaving her employed in looking over a page of letters she had well-nigh learned, Kate joined the family, to consult them in regard to the position Susan should occupy in the household. Mr. Felton, who had returned, after having been absent during the day, had been made acquainted with all that had transpired since morning. He was in a mood to rally his sister upon her selection of a pet; and he began to do so as soon as she entered the sitting-room, where he was cosily seated in an easy chair, with his feet in a pair of embroidered slippers, resting on another chair, or the back of one that stood near.

"Kate, I did not think you were quite so Quixotic as I find you are," said he, laughing.

"Didn't you?" she answered, in a lively tone. "Why,

I thought you did. But never mind; you will know all about me in time."

"But really, sis," said he, interrupting her, "you'll find your hands full with this business you've undertaken. I'm afraid you'll not succeed."

"I don't expect to by my own strength, John; but I have been assisted in what I have done, and shall be in what I still purpose to do, by this girl, so providentially thrown upon my care. There is little romance, brother, in doing one's duty. There may be some; but that little phrase, 'doing one's duty,' is a sober one, — earnest and real as the most staid could wish."

"Then you really think that duty demands all this of you, sister?"

"Should I have felt satisfied that I had done right, if I had neglected the cry of distress that caught my ear this morning, and led me to take this poor helpless one?"

"Perhaps not, sis; and you shall have it all your own way," replied he, rather soberly.

"I don't wish it *all* my own way," said she. "I have come down now to consult you and Martha in regard to the place she is to occupy in the family."

"That is something to be thought of, certainly," remarked Mrs. John; then added, "she is not to be a servant, or treated like one."

"I think she has the germs of something noble in her nature," said Kate. "I think it will be best to learn her to be like ourselves. I refer to table manners, and behaviour in general."

"You are right, Kate. Still, I'm thinking you will need a set of rules, such as I have heard of, for behaviour

in the different departments to which she will be introduced," said her brother, laughing.

"She will not do as well if burdened with rules. Believe me, she will learn any thing we attempt to teach her."

"She is a very pretty looking girl," said Mrs. John.

"Do bring her down to tea, Kate," said her brother, "and let me see her; — she must not eat in the kitchen, you know."

"I will, if the whole family vote so."

All did vote thus; and Kate, after entreating the younger members of the party to be careful and not laugh at any blunders Susan might make, went to call her to tea. Susan had never seen so neatly a spread table before. She did not know how to conduct herself, and could not be expected to. At first, she was very stiff, and manifested a feeling of restraint that was almost painful; but she had been told by her kind benefactress to notice those at table, and do as they did. Her power of imitation was considerable; and, even on that first occasion of sitting with the polite and refined at the social board, she was able to acquit herself far better than even Kate, with all her hopefulness, had expected. Mr. Felton congratulated his sister on her first attempts at "civilizing the untutored," as he called her efforts with Susan.

"Not the first attempt," said his mother. "She has been in this field of labor before now. Her first experiments were made at Rosefield."

"She is young to be almost a veteran missionary, I declare," replied John. "And she makes me begin to feel ashamed of myself."

"In a sense, we should all be missionaries, always," responded the mother. "We shall not be in danger of doing too much good."

"I am afraid for sister though, mother, honestly."

"Afraid of what?"

"That she'll get imposed upon."

"Better endure that a thousand times, than not trust at all, my son."

"Perhaps so," was the faint rejoinder. "But Kate must allow me to laugh at her, if she does not succeed with this poor white subject," said he.

"Certainly," said Kate, gaily, as she at that moment entered the room, after having attended her new charge back to her chamber, in order to give her brother an opportunity to express his pent-up thoughts and feelings in regard to her.

"You don't find fault with her appearance, do you, John?"

"No, — she will make a splendid girl; that is, she would if she belonged to the right stock."

"She does, — she belongs to our stock."

"Our stock! What do you mean?"

"I mean, that she belongs to the same family that we do. She has the same Father, and I rather think he has given her better gifts than he has bestowed upon us; and I shall feel honored, if he allows me the privilege of helping to bring out and improve these gifts."

"Then you think she is gifted!"

"I do. She is very quick, and has excellent parts. She has mastered the whole alphabet in an hour or two, and seems to thirst already for knowledge."

"But you did not know this when you bought her."

"I did not buy her. I repudiate the idea of owning a fellow-creature."

"Take care, sis! You needn't hit upon facts, just now."

"I can't help people's being in the way of facts' hitting them; but would, gladly, if I could."

"There is no use in being angry at you, Kate. If there was, I should be, sometimes, certainly," responded her brother.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SQUATTERS. — THE PARTY.

TRUE to her promise, Kate, in company with her brother, visited the miserable home of Susan's father, in a day or two after that on which she took the girl from him. Her heart sickened as she entered it. She found the man, his wife, and two children, sitting at what was intended for a table. They had nearly finished their meal, when Mr. Felton and herself went in.

"I've come," said Kate, "to do as I agreed to by you."

The man looked gratified. The woman arose, and, clearing some rubbish out of sight, handed a broken chair towards Kate, saying, —

"Sit down, if you can. I s'pose ye ain't used to seeing such a poor place as this."

Kate took the offered chair, and said pleasantly, —

"I want to put you in the way of having a better home than this."

The woman stared, Mr. Felton looked comical, while Kate, seating herself, told the man she had brought a paper for him to sign. She then read it aloud, and requested him to pay attention, so as to know just what he set his mark to. The man nodded, and Kate read the document. It was a pledge to allow Kate the control of his daughter so long as she was a minor; promising, also, not to interfere with her in any way to cause trouble. Then followed a receipt for thirty dollars, received of Kate. To this he

authorized Mr. Felton to affix his name, which was James Wilkins, and then added his mark.

"Now," said Kate, "here is the twenty-eight dollars which I owe you. I feel that you have a right to do with the whole amount as you please; still, I should like to advise you in regard to disposing of a part of it, at least. Are you willing to hear me?"

"Yes, I am," said the man; staring at her as though he would get at her meaning.

"I don't wish you to live in this way any longer, without trying hard to get out of it."

"I'd like to, a sight," answered Wilkins.

"Well then, Mr. Wilkins, suppose with some of this money you commence a small business. I have heard of, indeed known, a man who began his fortune with only one dollar."

"What did he do with his dollar?"

"Why, he bought paper rags, and sold them for something more than he gave; then he bought more, and sold again, and continued doing so until he was able to engage in a more profitable business. Afterwards he became a rich and distinguished man, although he started a beggar; for the dollar was given him by a gentleman of whom he begged a morsel of food."

"Do you think I could do any thing in that way?" asked Mr. Wilkins.

"I do: why can't you as well as another poor man; but, if you don't like the idea of that business, you can do something else. You can buy little needful articles in somewhat large quantities, and then sell them in small quantities for more than you gave, by carrying them about the country."

"Who will buy them, do you think?"

"Oh! a great many people, my friends and others. I shall patronize you considerably myself. We use a great deal of thread, tape, yarn, and all such needfuls, at our house. Don't you approve of my plans?"

"I do, and I am willing to begin."

"Do," said his wife. "I'm sure the lady's kind; and, if she's known of folks getting on with less, I don't see why you can't do something with some of this money. I shall feel some heart to try to clean up, and be somebody, if you do something like that."

"Commence trader at once," said Kate, "and don't be discouraged at trifles."

"I'll try," said Wilkins, "I will sartin; but I wish I wasn't a poor white."

"Make people forget that you ever were one," said the young lady, "and then you will not think of it yourself. Let us all see that you can be in reality a man."

"He will!" exclaimed Mrs. Wilkins, "and we shall see better days. It seems so good to have such kind words spoken to us, and have anybody 'pear as if they cared for us that it makes me feel like crying out loud," said she; wiping the tears from her face, that were freely flowing.

"I will git some decent clothes, and a basket of things, by to-morrow, and begin," said Mr. Wilkins.

"Come to our house, then," said Kate, "and we will be among your first customers."

She then gave the children some little cakes she had brought for them, and asked them if they would like to know how to read. They answered "Yes."

"I wish I could learn," said the mother.

"You shall, then," replied Kate.

"How can I?"

"I will teach you if you will come to me two or three times a week, and spend an hour or more each time."

"I will as soon as I can fix me up a little."

"Don't forget it," said Kate, as she took leave of the family, revolving in her own mind a plan to enable those children to receive instruction. Her brother walked for a few minutes by her side in silence, as Kate tripped, with a light heart, over the smooth, soft, pine carpet that lay along their way. At length, raising his eyes to her face, and regarding her with a scrutinizing glance, he said, —

"It is a pity that you cannot shoulder the burdens and grievances of all mankind."

"No it is not; you are sadly mistaken in supposing it is."

"Why?"

"Because, if I should do so, others would be deprived of the privilege of gladdening the hearts of their fellow beings, which yields as much comfort to the benefactor as it affords to those who are benefitted. You know that 'it is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

"And yet," said Mr. Felton, "the more one gives, the more one receives."

"That proves the words of our Lord," answered his sister, "who declared that those who gave should receive again good measure, pressed down, and given them by man. I see," continued she, laughing, "that you don't feel as much like quarrelling with my notions of things you pretend to."

"Because it's of no use, Kate."

"Do you know the reason why?" asked she.

"I don't know that I do exactly."

"Well then, I'll tell you: it is because I have 'thus saith the Lord,' upon my side; and, like the great apostle to the Gentiles, you find it hard 'to kick against the pricks.'"

By this time they had reached home. On entering the house, they found that company had arrived during their absence, — the Rev. Mr. Easyside, and a relative of Mrs. John Felton, whose name was Marshly. These gentlemen were presented to Kate when she entered the dining-room, to which she was summoned by the dinner-bell, as soon as she had arranged her toilet after her return from her visit to the squatters. Susan remained up stairs, while Kate went down, because that lady did not think it best to present her with visitors. The child in the meantime employed herself in looking at some engravings that her friend had given her. Kate was pleased to see Mr. Easyside again, who came towards her in the kindest, most polite manner possible.

Mr. Marshly was rather more distant, and a shade of superciliousness might have been detected in his manner towards her. Soon after they were seated at the table this gentleman remarked, addressing Mr. Felton, —

"I did not know until to-day that your sister had come South as a missionary." This was said with a scornful curl of the lip. Kate, who fully appreciated this speech, said, at the same time laughing, —

"That is not strange, because my coming was not noticed in the public prints."

"Then you admit that you are a missionary," answered the other, not knowing just how to understand her.

"Admit that you didn't know, as you said just now," replied Kate with mock gravity.

"But," said Mr. Marshly, rather nonplussed, "what is one to infer from what you are doing."

"The truth, Mr. Marshly," replied Kate.

"That your business is to make efforts to reform the vile, — is that the truth?" asked he.

"It is not my business more than that of others."

"What others? asked Mr. Marshly.

"Why, everybody; all at this table, certainly," was her reply.

"On what ground do you make this assertion, Miss Felton?"

"On the ground of truth."

"Where do you find it?"

"In the Golden Rule, given us by the Redeemer of mankind," replied Kate.

"That is a rule that governs few, if any."

"Still it is a good one, is it not?"

"Why, yes; but then all do not understand it alike."

"Yet, Mr. Marshly, it is so plain that a wayfaring man, though a fool, need not mistake."

"All people are not situated alike," replied he.

"True," answered Kate," but all *feel* alike, all *are* alike; only, to use the expression of another, some are a great deal more so."

"Those poor whites whose cause you have espoused are among those who are 'more so,' are they not?" retorted the gentleman.

"In one way," said Kate, laughing; "and you and I in another. If our classes were just right, would there be such abject wretchedness, as a general thing, among the poorer or poorest class of white people in this country?"

"I think not, Miss Felton," remarked Mr. Easyside; "this state of things no doubt grows out of the institution of slavery."

"What should we do without slavery?" inquired Mr. Marshly.

"Far better than with it," replied the reverend gentleman, "if we could only be rid of it; but that cannot be thought of."

"I beg leave to differ from your opinion in this case," said Kate. "If an institution is not right, it is wrong; if wrong, it is sinful; and no sin is to be allowed in ourselves or our brother."

"Slavery of itself is a divine institution, Miss Felton," said Mr. Easyside. "It is only some of its surroundings that are wrong."

"Where did this institution get its divinity?" inquired the senior Mrs. Felton.

"Why," said the clergyman, looking at Mrs. Felton, in surprise, "you must be aware that Abraham, the father of the faithful, was a holder of slaves."

"I am not," she replied.

"Did you ever read the book of Genesis, madam?"

"Certainly, I have read all the Bible; but I find not one sentence approving our system of slavery."

"You say *our* system; I thought you belonged to the North," said Mr. Marshly.

"I do reside there when at home," said she. "New

England was my birthplace; but I cannot help feeling that I am not guiltless in the matter of depriving millions of my fellow-beings of the blessings of freedom."

"But to return to our subject," resumed Mr. Easyside; "Abraham had slaves, bond men and women."

"True, but they were not held as our slaves are," was the lady's rejoinder; "and, more than that, they had the privilege of changing their situation every fiftieth year. Those that chose to remain, however, were marked by having their ears bored."

"Perhaps," said Kate, laughing, "it is right to infer that they received a present of a pair of ear-rings; though nothing is said about it." Then, turning to Mr. Easyside, she said, with a comical look at his reverence, —

"Do you remember when the slaves here had *such* a jubilee?"

"Miss Felton," — and he paused, at a loss for words. Kate laughed, and the gravest could not help smiling. Kate continued, —

"How ridiculous we make ourselves, don't we, in trying to apologize for this plague-spot upon a nation's glory!"

"*You* say *we*, too," said Mr. Easyside.

"I mean it, also," responded Kate; "for I feel that all belonging to these United States can and ought to adopt the language of Joseph's brethren, and say, "We are verily guilty concerning our brethren, in that we have seen the anguish of their souls, when they besought us and we would not hear."

"Then," replied Mr. Marshly, "you think we are all a pack of sinners, not excepting yourself."

"I do," answered Kate. "It is no use for the North, in effect, to imitate Pilate, when 'he took water and washed his hands, saying, I am clean of this blood' of these millions. Let the South see to it."

"For myself," said Mr. Easyside, "the perplexity and inconvenience attending our peculiar institution have made me wish a hundred times that my forefathers had not left me such a legacy."

"It is strange," said Mrs. Felton, senior, "that those men who had but just began to taste the sweets of independence should be eager to fasten the yoke of oppression upon their fellow-men. They offered a poor thank-offering for the benefits God had granted them. The compromise *made* or accepted by the North with slavery, is, to my view, the darkest feature in our country's history."

"But things must be as they are now," said the clergyman. "It don't help the matter to talk about it."

"Will silence on the subject make it better in any way?" asked Kate.

"No," answered Mr. Felton, "silence will not change public sentiment; and that is what must be done."

"We enjoy the privilege of free speech, — all may say what they think," said Mr. Marshly.

"You forget to except a few millions," retorted Kate; — "those to whom our declaration of independence is a mockery."

"You interrupted me," replied the gentleman, rather nervously; "but it is of no use to argue with people whose minds are made up, as are your mother's and your own."

"When one has a case to argue, it is," said Kate, good-

naturedly; "but you have not,—there is not any thing to be said in favor of slavery."

"Well," said Mr. Marshly, "I'm willing to drop the subject, for the present at least. I want to know what you expect to make of these poor white friends of yours."

"I don't expect to make any thing of them, but encourage them to make of themselves as much as may be."

"That won't be much."

"It will be something, however."

"No."

"Why?"

"They are too degraded."

"Not for the gospel to raise and reassure them. I believe this,—that 'it is not by might nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord.'"

"I shall like to see the result of your efforts with these squatters, a few years hence."

"I hope you will live to do so, Mr. Marshly," said Kate. "I may be too sanguine; but I trust these people will never again become as low as they have been. We shall see."

"True," was the gentleman's rejoinder.

The next day, Wilkins made his appearance at the back door of the long hall that extended through the middle of the house, with a basket upon his arm. His personal appearance was greatly improved; so much so, that, at the first sight, Kate did not know him. He was clean; and his clothes, though of coarse material, were more than decent. The articles in his basket were well selected; and from them Kate took quite a number of little house-

hold necessaries. Her mother and sister also bought several articles. The poor man seemed much pleased; and expressed more gratitude than it seemed possible for a man, such as he had appeared only a few days before, to feel.

"You must not expect to find such ready customers as we have been at every house you call at; yet that must not dishearten you," said Kate. "I want you to persevere. Go right on. By the way," said she, "have you ever signed a temperance pledge? Or, in other words, have you ever resolved and promised not to drink whiskey, or any ardent spirits?"

Wilkins said he never had, and had been in the habit of drinking sometimes; though he had not drank as much as he wanted, because he could not get it. Kate told him he was frank to acknowledge this.

"But you will give up whiskey, will you not?"

"What! never take any more! Do you mean that you want me to promise that?"

"Yes," replied Kate, "and nothing less. Spirits hurt you. You do not need it at all. Other persons promise this; why cannot you?"

"I don't know," said he, moving his fingers uneasily upon the handle of the basket he had taken in his hand, preparing to leave. "I'm afeered I couldn't keep such a promise."

"You distrust yourself. I am glad of that. There is more hope of you on that account. But are you willing to leave off drinking?"

"I'd be right glad to do it," replied the man.

"Then sign a promise that you will not. It will help you very much."

Kate then produced a temperance pledge, to which he affixed his mark.

"I'm glad I've did that," said he, after his mark was made. "I feel better, somehow."

"More like a man, I suppose," said Kate, smiling.

"That's it, I bleve," responded he. "Now you'll see I'll keep that ere promise one while."

"I hope you will," replied Kate; "and I wish that you may be prospered in all your new undertakings. I trust that you will be. Who knows but that, in a year or two, you may be able to immigrate west, and buy land? Would not that be pleasant, to have a home of your own getting?"

"I'm sure it would," said the man. "That's the right idee. I'll try for't, see if I don't now."

He took leave of Kate in high spirits, and went on his way with a brisk step. Mr. Marshly, who was still at Groveton, had seen Wilkins, and, unobserved by any one, had heard the conversation that had passed between him and Kate. He now came forward, and with a laugh and shrug of his shoulders, in a sarcastic manner, congratulated her upon her success in her first attempt with the offscourings of creation, as he styled Mr. Wilkins and his daughter. Kate answered pleasantly, not appearing to comprehend the drift of his remark, —

"Don't be in too much haste to congratulate me, sir. Perhaps my hopes may be disappointed; and then you would have to feel that you had been premature in your decision. Better wait, sir." And she turned from him, and joined her mother and sister, in the sitting-room.

She had hardly seated herself, and taken her work,

when a visitor was announced. It was a niece of Mrs. John Felton's. Her name was Julia Abbott. As she entered, her aunt gladly welcomed her, and presented her to her friends. Kate was much interested in her appearance. She was about seventeen years of age, about medium height, and her form was faultless. Her complexion was a beautiful brunette, set off by a lovely glow, that fluctuated with each passing feeling of her soul. Her eyes were dark, deep, and spiritual. Her mouth and teeth compared well with these; while her hair hung in dark brown ringlets about her neck.

"I wonder if her countenance is an index to her soul," thought Kate. "I hope she is good;—she looks lovable."

Julia was lively and fascinating. Her company was a decided acquisition to the society at the plantation. Her sprightliness and humor delighted Emma and Rosa; although they confessed to each other, that their Aunt Kate had a loveliness of voice and manner that Julia did not possess. She was a native of South Carolina. Her father was a slaveholder. She was so accustomed to colored servants, when on one occasion she was travelling at the North, she expressed great horror at seeing white waiters at table. It was, she thought, degrading to a white complexion to labor; yet never, even for a moment, fancied that her father's slaves were made for any thing else. Julia brought a servant to Groveton; a kind, pleasant girl, about eighteen years old, whose name was Hagar. This girl was free from the taint of Anglo-Saxon blood, consequently inherited the natural amiability and servility peculiar to the African race. From her child-

hood she had been a faithful slave to Julia. She had always run at the faintest indication from her young mistress, to do her bidding. She did so now.

Not many days passed after Julia's arrival at Mr. Felton's plantation, before Kate was pained to be obliged to acknowledge that Julia Abbott was governed almost entirely by impulse. No fixed principle influenced her actions. She could not and would not bear contradiction at all. Her temper was easily ruffled. Kate, in her straightforward, yet kindest possible manner, pointed out to her the sinfulness and folly of this want of self-control.

"I wish I wasn't so quick-tempered," Julia would exclaim; "but I can't help it, — I was born so."

"That is no reason why you should remain so," answered Kate. "We should get rid of our birth foibles. That is the design of our probation."

"If *you* ever had any, you have got rid of yours, then," replied Julia, with a smile. "I wish I was like you."

"That is not much of a wish. You ought to have a higher standard of excellence than that."

"What is your standard, Kate?" asked Julia.

"The Bible, my dear Julia. I aim to reach the standard of its heavenly precepts, but greatly fail in my attempts."

"I should say, rather, you had been greatly successful."

On the morning following the conversation just related, as Kate was busy in her own room, Hagar, Julia's maid, hurriedly entered, and begged her to go quickly to see her young mistress.

"What is the matter?" asked she, as in haste herself and the girl were on their way to Julia's apartments.

"Oh! I dun no," said Hagar. "She dat faint. She's so often."

On entering the chamber, to which Hagar led the way, Kate found Julia lying upon her bed. Her toilet had been made, and she was still dressed. Her face was pale; and Kate, after making some inquiries respecting her feelings, proceeded at once to administer the requisite remedies.

"How long have you felt unwell?" inquired Kate, as she took the glass from Julia's hand, out of which she had drunk a portion of reviving cordial.

"I didn't rest well last night," replied the invalid; "and I got so excited about my dress this morning, that it overcame me. I'm subject to fainting fits."

"I am sorry," responded Kate. "May I ask the cause of your excitement?"

"Oh! I only got provoked. You may go down stairs," said she to her servant, "for a little while." She was obeyed, and then went on, —

"Hagar didn't arrange my collar to suit me at all. I made her fix it two or three times over, but she didn't do it to please me. I was so much vexed that I whipped her as hard as I could. This made me faint; and I should have fallen, had she not caught me in her arms."

"Whipped Hagar, did you say?"

"Yes."

"Can that be possible?" interrogated Kate.

"Why," asked the other, "is it any thing uncommon to whip a slave?"

"It is in this house, or on this plantation; and I pity the people where such a thing is common."

"The blacks, I presume, have your pity," said Julia.

"Not more than their owners. The case of the injured is not in the end worse than that of the injurer."

"You consider slaves an injured people!"

"I do, — injured they are by this whole country. That portion of its sons and daughters who have not been actors in this tragical drama have looked on with far too much want of feeling for those of their fellow-beings who have worn oppression's chains. But tell me, Julia dear, tell me candidly, — did not you feel rebuked by the kindness of Hagar, in not permitting you to fall, when you were entirely in her power?"

"It made me wish I had not struck her."

"Do you believe," asked Kate, "that you would have done as she did, had you been in her place?"

"No: I think I should have felt angry at one for striking me, and I don't know that I shouldn't have killed them; but Hagar is only a slave, she is used to blows."

"Only a slave, and used to blows," repeated Kate very soberly. "Julia, you shock me."

"I wish I hadn't struck Hagar," said the other, a little nervously; "but I can't help it now."

"You can make restitution," said her friend.

"How?"

"Tell Hagar that you regret striking her."

"What! confess to a servant that I feel that I have done wrong? Never!

"Why not?"

"It would degrade me in her opinion."

"You are mistaken; it would exalt you. Whether or not you own it, the girl knows you have done wrong, and she will respect you more for admitting it yourself."

"Should you respect me more, Kate?"

"Yes, I certainly should."

"Well," replied Julia, "I'll try in some sort of a way to make her understand my feelings without confessing them; and I'll try and not strike her again, as you seem so shocked."

"I would not dare," replied Kate, "call a fellow-creature mine in the sense you own a slave. Power is a fearful responsibility; and, as one writer affirms, 'it is responsibility to its utmost limit.'"

Kate did not mention the events of the morning to the family, farther than to inform them that Julia had suffered slightly from illness, and wished to be excused at breakfast. Hagar was called, and dispatched with some coffee and light food to her room, where she was found by the family, who, each and all, went to look in upon Julia after breakfast. Hagar was busy in the performance of little kind acts, which she thought might add to the comfort of her passionate little mistress. She had selected some of the prettiest flowers the season afforded, and arranged them with care; she was putting them into a vase of water just as Julia's aunt entered the room. Hagar carried the vase to the bedside of her mistress, and asked her to look at the boquet. Julia looked, and admired it; but a pang shot through her heart as conscience told her she did not deserve such kindness from Hagar. The girl felt rewarded by a smile from the capricious young lady, and, not being needed, left the room. Soon all went out except Kate, who brought some needle-work and sat down by Julia's bedside.

"Kate," said the latter with a serious look, "I am

glad to be left with only you, for I feel nervous; what you have said to me this morning has affected my feelings very much."

"I can say, too, that what I have heard from your lips this morning has affected me. You have made a startling and degrading confession, which I hope you will never have occasion to do again."

"I haven't confessed in words to Hagar, though I have tried to make her realize that I regret getting so angry at her about so foolish a thing as a collar."

"I didn't think you had told her; I referred to your admission that Hagar was used to blows."

"Kate, you are like my mother; she used to grieve always when I struck any of the servants. She did not like being obliged to have slaves at all. You have reminded me of her very strongly; it seems to me I can see her as she used to look upon me when I would get into a passion. So mild and calm she always was, except when any thing occurred which she called injustice to the slaves. Then she would manifest great indignation. I remember the impression that her words at such times made upon my mind. I could not define then the idea I conceived of her, but I was conscious of respecting her the more for the stand she took against every species of injustice and wrong. Her indignation was virtuous, if there ever was any of the sort cherished."

"You love *her* memory, Julia, don't you?" asked Kate.

"I do indeed," replied Julia, while she wiped away the starting tear. "I wish I was as good as she was; although I don't know that I wish to be exactly like her

for father wouldn't have patience with me. He didn't with her always."

"Did your father become impatient at *goodness?*" asked her friend.

"Why you see it disturbed him to have mother remonstrate so much with him about doing the servants wrong. When I was a very little girl, I remember hearing him say that he wished he was not obliged to be trammelled by mother's foolish scruples of conscience, but be free to act like his neighbors."

"Where did your mother imbibe her feelings in regard to this subject?"

"Oh! they were born with her, I suspect; for grandfather says she always was distressed because he kept slaves when she was a child. He freed several to oblige her; and she gave free papers to all that were given her at or before her marriage. Grandfather has not had slaves for a long time: he says he feels that my mother's ideas upon the subject were correct."

"I suppose," said Kate, "your mother expected to influence *your* father as she had done her own."

"Yes, I dare say she did; but my father is a different person. I think if mother had lived I should have been different."

"In what respect, Julia?"

"I think I should not have indulged my temper as much as I have done; but father does not dislike my doing so, if I am not ill-natured towards him, so that I have become a spoiled child."

"Not entirely, my dear; you can overcome this naughty trait of yours *now*, if you only make the attempts in good earnest."

"If I could always live with such characters as my mother and yourself, Kate, I could. My character takes a coloring from the society I am with."

"That you must guard against by cultivating a principle of right; that will make you more independent of others."

"But I am impulsive; my feelings are very quick, and I give way to them without reflection."

"You may make some resolutions that would assist you."

"So I can, and I will. I promise you now, that I never will strike Hagar again."

"Go farther, Julia: promise not to whip *any* of your father's slaves."

"I will. I trust I can keep my word, if I do get angry."

"Don't try to do this, or any thing else, in your own strength, my dear friend; but look above to Him who is ever ready to help the feeblest in their struggles with sin."

"I wish I was a Christian," said Julia, thoughtfully; "my mother was."

"You *must* become one," replied Kate.

At that moment a servant came to inform Kate that some poor whites were waiting in the kitchen to see her. The servant was none other than Jim, one of the lads whom Kate disappointed in their plans for teasing Susan, when she was brought to the plantation. Jim loved fun immoderately, and to him there was nothing better to be thought of than making himself and others merry at the expense of any poor whites that fell in his way.

"They is sich poor trash," he would say; "they is no 'count at all."

On this occasion he tried in vain to conceal his roguish expression of countenance. His eyes were brimful of fun, as he lingered at the head of the stairs to say a few words to Kate, as she came out of her friend's room.

"Missee Kate!" said he, as soon as he saw her advancing towards him, "reckons you dun no what smart-lookin' uns ye's gwine ter see dis sher mornin' in de kitchen. La's me! they be'd dressed fit ter kill, them poor whites is!"

"How, Jim? — what do you mean?" asked the young lady.

"Why, them ar poor critters is im'tating other folks, — they's raal decent."

"Do you mean Wilkins's family, Jim?"

"Reckons I does," said the boy, with such a grimace, that Kate could hardly refrain from smiling, he looked so comical.

"Well, Jim, why are you so amused about it? Are you not glad to see them improving?"

"La's yees, um! Only I can't help a larfin', cause they's so stiff about it, — dun no how to act!"

"Don't laugh at them, Jim; will you?"

"No: cause ye don't want me ter, that's all."

Kate went out to the kitchen, where she found Mrs. Wilkins and her two youngest children decently dressed, awaiting her coming. According to agreement, she had before this come several times, and received instruction from Kate. This morning she appeared with her children, much more neatly dressed than on any former occasion.

"Good morning, Mrs. Wilkins!" was Kate's salutation when she entered the room, and that person arose to

meet her. "And good morning, Sally and John!" said she, as she extended her hand to each of them. "I am glad to see you appearing so well this morning. I hope your husband is doing nicely too," continued she, addressing Mrs. Wilkins.

"Oh! very nicely, mum," replied the woman; "and I'm so glad we ever see ye. I tell my man ye's saved us from a dreffful sight of trouble."

"Look higher than me, my friend: it was God who put it into my heart to help you. You should thank him."

"Well, if he did that, he is good, any how; and I ought to love him."

"He did do it, Mrs. Wilkins; for, without his Spirit, I should not have been interested for you, as I have been, and still continue to be. I cannot feel satisfied until you become acquainted with Him, and a friend to this, your best, your highest friend."

"My man —" began the woman.

"Do call him Mr. Wilkins when you speak of him to any, except your children," said Kate; "it sounds so much better than *my man*."

"I will, then. Mr. Wilkins says he can't forget what you said to him about God: he thinks of it every day."

"I am glad he has not forgotten that there is a God," said Kate; "I hope both himself and you will soon learn to love and trust him."

Mrs. Wilkins improved every day in her attempts to learn. She was pleased and encouraged by the interest her young and disinterested friend manifested in her welfare. She strove in every way to do as she was desired

by Kate, and seldom let an opportunity pass unimproved of telling her how very glad she felt that she chanced to be at the grove on that morning, to save Susan from being a slave. Kate was often rallied upon her missionary efforts: she always laughed with those that made themselves merry at her expense, and never did she intentionally cast a shade over her brother's household. Susan gained constantly upon the good-will of the whole family. In every thing she gave satisfaction. Emma and Rosa did not shrink from playing with her. She was always yielding in all little matters, where an accommodating disposition was desirable; besides, she made herself useful whenever she could. Time flew on apace. Weeks passed rapidly away, and months did not tarry long. The season appointed for the return of Mrs. Felton and Kate was hastening onward.

No one at her brother's loved to think of parting with this lovely girl. The mother had made herself beloved; but Kate had gained a much larger share of affection among all the members of the household. Being active, and enjoying good health, she delighted to mingle as much as possible with the people, — more than her brother at first really approved of her doing. Afterwards, when he saw that no ill effects followed this course of Kate's, he ceased to give himself any anxiety upon the subject. Kate was glad that his own observation had convinced him of that which argument had failed in doing, — that persons must not stand too much aloof from those they aim to benefit.

"You see, brother," said Kate to Mr. Felton one day, as she came into the room where he was sitting (he had

been regarding her with a significant smile as she approached the house), "that not one of all these poor people who appear to love me so well, and are loved by me in return, would expect me to invite them to visit me at any time, when I might have guests of a different class. Their good common sense teaches them what is proper, as I believe it does generally in such cases. You need never fear that any being will be injured by kind treatment. No, John; such treatment often has reclaimed the wanderer from virtue. I adopt the sentiment of one who sang, 'Kind words can never die.'"

"I will not gainsay you, sis," replied her brother; "I believe you are nearer right than I. But I must not forget to tell you, that we are all invited to spend to-morrow at the home of our friend, Mr. Easyside. Mother says she will go if you wish to; and, for Martha's sake and mine, you must wish to, for we wish very much to have you go. You know you have been abroad but little since you came here; and I feel as if I had not done quite right in keeping you so much at home."

"You have not kept me at home, John. Mother's health has been the reason why I have not left home more; but, now she is better, if she can bear the fatigue of this contemplated visit, I will go with you all."

CHAPTER V.

THE PARTY.

Mrs. Felton was able to attend the dinner-party, to which they were all invited; and on the next morning, being joined by Mr. Marshly, who had not as yet returned to his own residence, they started, at rather an early hour, for Mr. Easyside's mansion, that they might take the longest way, and thus enjoy a ride, upon one of the most delightful mornings that was ever enjoyed, even at the sunny South. The air was clear, and mildly invigorating to the spirits of the happy party, who saw much to admire in the woodland scenery through which their route lay. Nature, who, as Wordsworth says,—

> "Never did betray
> The heart that loved her!"

was striving to make each hillock and grove attractive to the most careless observer. Mr. Felton, with his wife and mother, occupied one carriage; while Julia, Kate, and Mr. Marshly rode in another, close behind them. The last mentioned was in high spirits: he seemed exactly suited with his company, and never troubled himself to find out whether his feelings were reciprocated by his companions. In reply to Kate, who made some appropriate remark upon the beauty of the morning, he said, "You don't begin to have such loveliness as this at the North, Miss Felton."

"Not so early in the season, I admit. Nature begins

her yearly painting at the South, but gives her finishing touches at the North. I love her pencillings, wherever I see them, and feel to ask, with Thomson, 'Who can paint like Nature?' Truly, as that poet has affirmed, imagination cannot boast, amid its gay creation, hues like hers!"

"You are an enthusiastic admirer of poetry, as well as of nature," observed Mr. Marshly, regarding her beaming countenance the while.

"I am, certainly; and of everything else that is beautiful, and I may add good."

"It is a happy thing for you that you are so constituted," rejoined the gentleman; "because you don't see the plain matter of fact that most people are annoyed with."

"You mistake there, Mr. Marshly: those who enjoy the pleasures of life most ardently suffer from its ills most keenly."

"I should suppose, Miss Felton, that you had ever been one of those favored ones who escape the ills of life."

"You have judged hastily, I suspect," said Kate; "if there are any who do not experience trials, you may be assured that they are cheated out of their rightful legacy. There is no class like that you appear to think I belong to."

"But how is it, then, that you are always cheerful?"

"I strive against sadness, feeling it is a sin; for, as the poet has it, 'Tis impious to be sad.'"

Julia joined in the conversation, and contended that one could not help these feelings. Kate thought that measurably we could be and feel as we chose. The conversation was kept up in a lively strain, until they reached their stopping-place. Mr. Easyside received them with great

cordiality. Many guests had arrived before them, and they were chidden by their host for their tardiness. They plead guilty to the charge of loitering, but declared the morning was in fault, not them. Among the ladies assembled in the drawing-room, Kate noticed a countenance which she at once recognized as belonging to the lady who had been her travelling-companion from Rosefield to Albany. This individual had been invited by some particular friends of Mr. Easyside, she being their guest at the time. She was characterized by the same air of self-complacency and hauteur that distinguished her when Kate first saw her. In a moment, however, Kate ceased to think of her presence; for memory brought before her the image of another closely associated with her in the recollections of that journey.

"Would I could see him again!" thought she, hardly conscious of her own feelings. Then she thought of the probabilities of meeting him at some future time, and almost involuntarily offered a prayer to that effect. Kate had little time to indulge these feelings, for Mr. Marshly was almost persecutingly attentive; so that it was a relief to her to hear the announcement of dinner, for she hoped that he would feel obliged to divide his attention between Julia and herself. In this, however, she was doomed to disappointment. He had contrived to provide her friend with an attendant; one who, if not exactly suited to her taste in some respects, afforded her a fund of amusement. He was a young sprig of nobility, that had never been grafted into anything calculated to impart strength and beauty to his character. He loved personal beauty, therefore was attracted by Julia's lovely face. He loved

approbation exceedingly, and he endeavored to please all with whom he came in contact. He dared not cherish an independent opinion upon any subject, but waited to hear the opinion of those he thought his superiors, before he ventured to think at all. He never dissented from the views of such, or stopped to inquire whether they were right. His name was Platon; but Julia, ere dinner was over, named him Mr. Pliable. Her seat at table was between this gentleman and Mr. Marshly; Kate being seated at the right hand of the latter gentleman.

"How I wish you would change seats with me, Mr. Marshly!" said Julia, with a mischievous glance, first at Kate, and then at Platon.

"Why?" asked he.

"Oh! I think it would be an excellent plan."

"But why will you not tell me?"

"Oh! I think you had better not know, if you cannot guess."

"How can I?"

"Perhaps you cannot; you are not a Yankee, are you?"

"No. But don't you like Mr. Platon?"

"Yes, what there is to like."

"Is he not a most agreeable person?"

"To some, I suppose; but he is a perfect Mr. Pliable."

At this juncture, the gentleman who had been the subject of these remarks, turned his face towards Julia, who blushed at the consciousness of the risk she had run of being overheard.

"Why, Miss Abbott!" said he, "you look disturbed. I have been too much engaged, and neglected you, I fear."

"No, Mr. Platon, you have not neglected me; I assure you I have not had such a thought."

"You are very good to excuse me so readily," said he.

"Why, Mr. Platon, do you mean me to understand that you have been neglecting me to test my patience?"

"No, no, Miss Abbott, I do not; but I thought something was wrong by your looks."

Julia was in agony. She really wished he knew the reason of her blushes, but thought it hardly right to tell him. Kate was greatly amused also, — she joined Julia in wishing her seat could be exchanged with that of the officious gent beside her, but this might not be. Mr. Platon after this made himself more than ever ridiculous by his too great attention to the lady, who heartily wished him anywhere but near her: he, poor man, felt sure it was his turning to speak to another lady for a few minutes that had disconcerted her so. He would not, he said to himself, offend again in that way. His self-conceit prevented him from even imagining that he was any thing but agreeable to the ladies. He bowed, and said soft things, as if he supposed women were entirely destitute of common sense, and must be treated like dolls. He was proud of his company on this occasion, and made himself quite conspicuous at the table, and was called very polite by some who saw only the surface of things.

Mrs. Felton was seated between her son and his wife, at the end of the table opposite the young people. Mrs. John Felton noticed with some satisfaction the interest manifested by Mr. Marshly for Kate. He was her relative; besides, he was a highly respectable man. Although in easy circumstances, he had not formed any

matrimonial engagement. Mrs. John watched closely, if possible to discover if Kate reciprocated his regard, but observed nothing in her manner to lead to such a supposition. Another looked earnestly at the party as if to satisfy herself that she had seen one of their number before. This was Mrs. Upton, the lady whom Mrs. Felton and Kate had seen in the cars. She sat next to Mrs. John Felton, and, after being convinced that Kate was the young lady who had before excited her interest and curiosity, ventured to inquire of that lady if she knew her. Being answered in the affirmative, she begged to know her name.

"Kate Felton," replied the other.

"Is she a relative of yours?"

"She is my husband's sister."

"We travelled together from Rosefield to Albany last autumn, and had some conversation on different subjects: she has some peculiar ideas for a young person."

"What ideas do you refer to?" asked Kate's mother, who was introduced to Mrs. Upton at the moment.

"Why, the thoughts she expressed upon labor, and equalizing the different classes in society, if I understood her."

"You could not have understood her rightly then, because she never advocates a position that cannot be sustained, and she does not think there can be perfect equality among men; but she shall have an opportunity to explain her meaning by-and-by."

"I want an introduction after we return to the parlor," said the lady.

Mrs. Upton's wish was gratified. She was formally

introduced, and Kate soon found herself well-nigh encircled by friends who were desirous of hearing the stately Mrs. Upton speak. She had seemed so exclusive, so reserved, so proud, that Julia wondered greatly at seeing her at once addressing her friend on familiar terms. Kate presented her brother, Julia, and Mr. Marshly. Mr. Platon had made her acquaintance before. The circle were engaged in conversation. Mrs. Felton claimed for her daughter the privilege of defending herself from the charges brought against her by Mrs. Upton; and this was done admirably.

"You misunderstood me entirely," said Kate; "and I hope I do the same in regard to your meaning. I don't love to feel that there are any who have the good of their fellow-beings so little at heart as to be willing to see any degraded. All by nature are possessed of equal rights. The opinion of slave-holders does not alter this fact at all. God *has* given to all men the privilege of making the most of themselves. He has made men free agents, but he has not endowed all with like gifts or tastes: one enjoys doing one thing, and another something very different. All belong to one great family; but, as it is in the great family gathering in New England on Thanksgiving, those of congenial feelings are drawn together in little circles for social converse. This is most enjoyed."

"Well, but you do not confine yourself to the society of those congenial to yourself."

"When I seek recreation I do.

"Shall I understand that you were seeking recreation in the car when you condescended to that shabby man?"

"I did not see such a one as you describe; I conde-

scended to no one. The gentleman you allude to was our superior, in my opinion."

Mrs. Upton was not pleased at this remark: she betrayed her annoyance; and Julia laughed, for she knew who was the subject of it. She had heard Kate speak of this interesting, care-worn stranger, and had so exalted an opinion of her judgment and taste, that what Mrs. Upton had said appeared to her very ridiculous; others joined her in expressions of merriment. The pretender to dignity, however, was not to be baffled without making an attempt to turn the laugh upon her young friend.

"I shall believe in love at first sight after this," said she; "I have often heard that love covers deficiencies, and I see that in this case his poverty was hid from your eyes."

Kate smiled somewhat sadly, and replied in a kind tone, that she regretted to learn that in Mrs. Upton's opinion poverty was a disgrace.

"I do not so consider it. It is plain the person you alluded to is contending with adverse circumstances: but he is struggling, — he is not idle; and I should not be at all astonished, if, at some future day, you behold him elevated far above *your* social position in society, or mine. He is noble; he will become, if his life is prolonged, a great man."

"Oh! you are too romantic."

"I repudiate the charge. There may occur, there have occurred, things stranger than this. He may put off his threadbare dress, and attire himself richly, easier, or as easily, as we can retain our more costly style of dress. A person's present surroundings are not what we should estimate them by, but rather what is in them."

Mr. and Mrs. Easyside now came towards the party, and requested Kate to take a seat at the piano. She complied; and every thing else was, for a time, forgotten by the company, who listened with delight to the rich strains of music produced by the instrument at the touch of her practised fingers. Mr. Marshly was entranced; and stood near, turning over the leaves of music in the most lover-like manner possible, until piece after piece had been played, and the performer left the piano. Mrs. Upton well-nigh begged an invitation of her and Mrs. Felton to visit them, and they invited her. Julia was glad, and told Kate, in a whisper, that she should see a great deal of her highness. The guests all took leave of their reverend host at an early hour. The Felton party were among the first to depart. The ride home, if not as delightful as that of the morning, was very pleasant, and enlivened by social chit-chat.

CHAPTER VI.

A LUDICROUS SCENE.

Not many days after the party, Julia received a call from Mr. Platon. Kate was below, and knew of his arrival first. She did not think it any thing remarkable that he should have called, and went immediately to inform Julia that she was wanted, and by whom.

"O Kate!" said Julia, "what shall I do?" as soon as her friend had spoken.

"Do! why, go down and see him, to be sure; that is the only thing proper to be done."

"But you don't know what a fix I am in."

"In what way, dear?"

"Why, I made that simpleton believe his visits would be agreeable to me. I took back what I said to encourage him, and told him at parting that I was only jesting; and he told me that I should know, some time, whether or not he believed me. I have not spoken of it before, because I have been flattering myself that he would not come. But there it is; how I shall be laughed at!"

"Never mind, Julia," said Kate; "go down, and make the best of it."

"I'll try to. But I wish you would have a beau too. I don't see why Mr. Marshly can't come and see you. Misery loves company, you know. Besides, if there is somebody else to notice, I shall be the less regarded. But I must go."

Saying this, Julia descended the stairs, her handsome features glowing with animation, which was produced by the amusement she felt, and struggled hard to conceal. When she entered the room, where Mr. Platon was awaiting her, he arose, and approached with all the confidence of an accepted lover. She was polite, but returned his salutation with coldness and reserve.

"I did not expect to see you here, Mr. Platon," said she.

"Did you not give me leave to visit you?"

"No, — in earnest, I did not; but told you, in the last words I spoke to you before I left Mr. Easyside's, that I did not mean what I had said upon the subject; and I had trusted you understood me."

"Miss Abbott, I do understand you to be a very unassuming young lady. You thought, perhaps, you were hasty in accepting my attentions, and shrink from the thought of my considering you forward; but, believe me, I do not. I appreciate your motives, and admire your modesty."

"But I am in earnest now, Mr. Platon. I did not mean you to understand as you have. I cannot receive your visits, and hope you will not trouble yourself to visit me again"

"Then you have not the lively preference for my society that your conduct towards me implied."

"I did not intend to give you such an impression," answered Julia.

"Then I was deceived in you."

"I did not expect such a result as this, just from an innocent joke," said she. "I regret what I have done;

and, if your feelings have been injured, I hope you will forgive my part in the affair."

The young gentleman now believed her in earnest; but her manner was so frank and kind, that he could not find it in his heart to be angry with her. He told her this, and they parted on friendly terms, after having been invited to take tea with the family, — an invitation which, notwithstanding the dilemma in which he found himself placed, he accepted with great apparent pleasure. Julia treated him with great consideration. Her manner towards him was frank, and entirely free from restraint. Kate, who was the only one in her secret, wondered how the case had been disposed of. That all difficulties were settled she was sure, from the appearance of both parties. She did not, however, have to wait long after the gentleman took his departure, ere Julia sought her, and gave her an exact account of all that had passed.

"You did nobly, Julia," said her friend. "It is always best to be guarded on the point of amusing ourselves with the weaknesses of others; you were in fault to make him think you had fallen in love with him, but I hope he will learn a good lesson from his mortification."

"I hope so too; but then I'm afraid he will forget it all too soon, for he is one of those ridiculous mortals who imagine that a lady loves every man she treats civilly."

"He will probably then, in future, consider you an exception to this rule, I presume," said Kate.

CHAPTER VII.

"Seek a good wife of thy God, for she is the best gift of his providence." — TUPPER.

JULIA'S visit had been protracted, week after week, since the time set for her return home had gone by. She had written to her father, to gain, if possible, his consent to her remaining as long as Mrs. Felton and Kate should stay. Therefore, with pleasure she opened a letter that was handed to her the morning after Mr. Platon's visit had been made, and read the welcome assurance that she had her father's leave to remain as long as she chose, if that was not to be the whole of the approaching summer. She read this part of the letter aloud to her aunt, who was the only person present at the time.

"Oh, I am so glad!" said she; "for I do enjoy staying here very much indeed. I love Kate dearly. I love to be with her."

"You are not the only one who loves her, Julia."

"I know that. I am sure that she is loved by all in *this house;* and I think by every one else that knows her."

"I am aware of that, Julia; but I refer to one in particular."

"To a gentleman, auntie?"

"Yes."

"Mr. Marshly, isn't it?"

"Yes. I think he has been very attentive to Kate."

"I fancy rather too much so. I don't think she greatly prefers him to the rest of us."

"I am afraid she don't, but hope she will *learn* to love him."

"You wish her to, then."

"I do," replied her aunt, "but have not before spoken upon the subject, except to your uncle."

"Mr. Marshly has not been here for a week, I believe, has he, Aunt Martha?"

"No, he has not; but your uncle expects him to-morrow."

Julia thought much upon the subject of this conversation, but did not speak of it to her friend. The morrow came, and brought the gentleman, as Mr. Felton had expected. Kate's countenance, when she met him at dinner, was a shade less cheerful than usual. Toward him she was frank and courteous; but in this she evinced no partiality. A close observer might have detected a slight reluctance, on her part, to taking a seat beside him. She was obliged to do this, however; and she made the best of it. *His* partiality was apparent to all the household. His attentions were very marked. His stay, at this time, was not as on former occasions short. He lingered. Day succeeded day, and yet he went not. Kate wondered he stopped so long; and so did all, but her brother and sister. It seemed plain to them that Kate intended to avoid giving him an opportunity of being alone with her. Kate did not know that *he* wished for a private interview, but was certain that *she* did not.

Things were at this crisis, when another visitor came. Mrs. Upton arrived, in company with a lady with whom Mr. Felton's family had been for some years intimate. Her name was Sanborn. Julia ran to meet Kate, in high

glee. The latter was just then returning from a visit to Ruthy's cabin. She had been listening patiently, and with feelings of sympathy, to a story of wrong and suffering from the lips of a poor creature who belonged on a neighboring plantation, and was on her way to a new home, to which she had been promised, by her mistress, for liberal wages.

"I'se sorry to go thar. I'd be dat glad ter die on the way. I knows what a bad man I'se got ter live wis."

"Does your mistress know him to be bad?" asked Kate.

"Lor yes, missus! but she can't help herself; she's done 'bleeged ter let me go, 'cause she needs money, and can't git it any odder way."

"Poor creature!" thought Kate. "All I can give her is my sympathy and my prayers; but these she shall have."

Believing, with the poet, that —

"Earth has no sorrows heaven cannot heal,"

she entreated her to go to Jesus her Saviour, and cast all her cares upon him.

"'Pears like he's a good ways off," said she, "and can't hear us poor niggers when we does pray."

"No, no," answered Kate. "He does hear, and ever will; and, if the blessings we ask seem to be denied, he will answer us, if we wait patiently. Remember God's chosen people were oppressed more years than you have been; and yet he delivered them in due time. He'll not forget one poor soul that looks to him for help."

"I'se glad I seed yer," said the poor woman. "It's sorter done me good."

This was said as she left the cabin to go on her way.

"I shall pray for you," said Kate.

"Thank ye, missus. I shan't forgit dat."

Kate was reflecting upon the sad condition of things in this world when Julia met her.

"Who do you think we have for a guest now?" asked she, laughing.

"I don't know, indeed," said Kate; "unless it's my dear friend, Mary Winthrop."

"No dear friend at all," responded the other. "It is her highness, Mrs. Upton, and another lady, whom aunt introduced as Mrs. Sanborn."

"We must do our part towards making them comfortable," said Kate. "We may enjoy their visit very much."

"We *may*," repeated Julia; "but I wish it had been your friend Mary, instead."

"Hush, Julia!" said Kate, as they drew near the house. "Perhaps it will not be best for Mary to come."

"Well, I'll be hushed in all but laughing. I must do that."

"Perhaps you need not," remarked her friend, as they went into the parlor.

Mrs. Upton manifested great pleasure at meeting Kate. The latter could hardly tell why. Their feelings were not at all congenial. Yet so it was: Mrs. Upton regarded the high position of her new friend. She had heard, too, that she would probably become, ere long, the bride of Mr. Marshly; and she was aware that he was a gentleman of fortune and influence, that he sometimes represented his State in Congress; and she never wearied of adding to

the number of her friends from among the highest circles in society. She should be proud to say that she was on visiting terms with the Feltons, — some of the first people in the country.

On the evening of the day on which Mrs. Upton became the guest of Mr. Felton, that gentleman, with his wife, mother, and that lady, were sitting together, engaged, or trying to be, in indifferent conversation, when Mr. Marshly came into the room, and inquired for the young ladies. Mrs. Felton, senior, informed him that they were particularly engaged at the moment, but would, she thought, be with them soon.

"Kate, I suppose," the gentleman answered, "has interested Julia to engage with her in some scheme for doing good. I have never seen a person exactly as *she* is."

"You don't respect her less for doing what she can to make the world better and happier, do you?" inquired Kate's mother.

"No, indeed, I do not. I only wish more were like her. When I first came here," he continued, "I thought it was a fault-finding spirit with the South that prompted her efforts with those poor whites and the slaves; but now I am convinced it is no such thing as that, but a spirit of love and universal good-will to all mankind. I heard, yesterday, of some scenes in which she was principal actress, that quite charmed me."

"Do you allude to the story of little Dora?" asked Mrs. Felton.

"I do; and I would ask if that child was as promising as the girl appears to be which she has now under her charge."

" She was a younger child, and very different from Susan," answered Mrs. Felton ; " had she lived she might have developed other traits. She was a sweet little creature, and we loved her very much."

The young ladies now came in attired for a walk. Mr. Marshly arose, and requested permission to accompany them, also Mrs. Sanborn. Mrs. Upton was invited, but preferred remaining with the friends who staid at home. Mr. Marshly walked beside Kate ; and Julia, suspecting his wishes in regard to her friend, contrived to leave the couple most of the time by themselves, and engage Mrs. Sanborn's attention with objects that came in their way. Kate was sorry for this, yet concluded it best to bear the trial she had striven to avoid cheerfully. The hour was well chosen for a short excursion, — the air was grateful, and nature was in some respects prodigal of her favors on that evening ; and, while the little party are pursuing their ramble, we shall leave them, and acquaint our readers with the history of little Dora.

It was upon a cheerless day in the month of December, about three years previous to the time above alluded to, that Kate Felton and Mary Winthrop went out upon some urgent errand. They shivered with the cold as they hurried along the streets through which their path lay. When returning home, and just before they came in sight of the house in which Mary lived, they met a little girl who was crying bitterly. Kate stopped as she drew near the child, and kindly inquired the cause of her sorrow.

" I can't find the man I was sent to see, and I'm cold," said she, " and hungry."

" Come along, Kate," said Mary ; " I am almost frozen

myself, — there is no need of hindering yourself with her."

"Though we are cold, we are not hungry, Mary; but you can hurry home if you choose. I am inclined to see this little one home. Where do you live, dear?" said she, addressing the child.

"Up in San Street: it is not far off, ma'arm."

"How came you hungry, — is your mother dead?"

"No, ma'am; but she is sick, and can't work now."

"Have you a father?"

"I don't know. I haven't seen him this great while."

"Have you any brothers or sisters?"

"Only one little baby brother that can't walk."

This conversation took place while Kate was walking along swiftly with the child in the direction of the abode of poverty to which the poor thing belonged. Mary Winthrop followed her friend; for, cold as she was, she felt she could not leave her to go to such a disagreeable place alone. They found the mother, as the child had said, very ill and very destitute.

"Did you find Mr. Gifton, Dora?" asked she as soon as the child entered, before she saw the young ladies; for she was lying upon a miserable bed with her back towards them.

"No, ma'am," said the child.

"Oh, dear!" responded the mother; "we shall starve then."

"No, indeed!" said Kate. "You shall not want; we have come in with your little girl to see what we can do for you," — at the same time taking Dora's hand and approaching the bedside to which the woman's face was turned.

"Heaven bless ye, then!" ejaculated the poor creature, bursting into tears.

"What a place!" whispered Mary.

"Have you any one to assist you to do your work?" asked Kate.

"Nobody but my little gal, there," was the reply.

It was evident that want and suffering reigned triumphant in that home, if such it ought to be termed. The fire, in an apology for a stove in which it had been made, was nearly extinguished. Kate, with the help of little Dora, soon revived it, however; and then, after procuring the assistance of a neighbor, who was as poor as Dora's mother, but not sick, she sent out and obtained some little comforts for the invalid, of which the poor soul partook with a smile upon her face which, as her neighbor, Mrs. Donly, said, "had not been seen there in many a long day." Kate secured the services of the latter for Dora's mother, whose name she learned was Smith. Poor Mrs. Smith attempted to express her gratitude; but her feelings overpowered her powers of articulation, — she could only sob.

"The poor, dear child has suffered a great deal," said Mrs. Donly. "Your ladyships know nothing at all about such living as we poor folks has when we're well; but to be sick like her, and be alone with two such childers, its hard indade to get on."

"I know it must be," replied Kate. "I must leave you now, but I will see that this family is provided for. Take the best of care of Mrs. Smith and these children, and you shall be well paid for it."

"That I will; and may the Lord bless ye for your kindness!" replied Mrs. Donly.

"I will be here again to-morrow," remarked Kate, as she took leave of the good woman.

The delay occasioned by this adventure made the young ladies' absence long enough to cause Mrs. Felton some surprise; but all was soon explained after their return, and she commended Kate for her interest in these children of misfortune. Mary told Mrs. Felton that she was glad she had been amid this poverty; "for," said she, "I had not even imagined there were such cases of wretchedness so near us, and if I had had my own way this child would have been passed by unheeded. I was almost impatient at Kate for stopping in this cold, drizzly, disagreeable weather to inquire into her troubles."

"Never, my dear Mary, allow yourself to be indifferent to the troubles of childhood; their tears are not artificial."

"I believe I have to-day learned a lesson I shall not soon forget."

"We must visit this place again to-morrow," said Kate to her mother. "From the appearance of the woman, I fear she has not long to live; there is a hectic flush upon her sunken cheeks, and her cough sounds hollow and sepulchral. She will only be made comfortable during the night by what we have given her. She must have more efficient aid immediately."

"I am glad," replied Mrs. Felton, "that you met this child, and thus gave us an object to labor for; it will do us all good."

"Do you include me in your remarks?" asked Mary

"I do. It will increase your happiness to employ your fingers in making some needful articles of clothing for the little ones. Come, let us all commence at once."

This plan was most cheerfully carried into effect. In a very short time a large basket, filled with cloth, flannel, and half-worn garments was placed beside the sofa where Mrs. Felton was sitting. Suitable articles were selected, and made ready to be sent to Mrs. Smith the next day; and some small garments were cut out and nearly finished, ere the hour for retiring to rest arrived. Early on the following morning, Kate, accompanied by a servant carrying a basket, took her way to the dwelling of the sufferer. She found Mrs. Donly busy in making the apartment more comfortable, by closing sundry little avenues through which the wind had long found admittance. She had scoured the floor, brushed the old ricketty stove, washed the table and chairs, and by so doing had given the room an appearance of more comfort than it wore the day previous. Mrs. Smith was very feeble that morning; her cough had been increased by the change of atmosphere in her apartment when the fire was low, and her voice was very weak.

When Kate approached her, and, kindly taking her hand, inquired how she felt, the woman, with a languid smile, answered,—

"Poorly; but it is so good to have anybody care for me, so good to have my room cleaned up too."

"I am glad your friend here has made you so tidy," said Kate, taking some clean clothes from the basket, that had been brought and set near the bed.

"How kind!" exclaimed both women in a breath.

"I was just after wishing we had some clean things to change her bed, and here they be!"

"Clean clothes are very necessary in sickness," said

Kate, as she took one article after another from the basket.

"Bless me! what a lot on um there is!" cried Mrs. Donly: "you ought to get well now, Mrs. Smith," she continued, "and I believe this will make you."

"It will make her more comfortable, I hope," said Kate; "but she is very ill. Does she have a physician now?"

"No," said Mrs. Donly. "She did a spell back along; but she did not mind what he told her much, and so he stopped coming."

"Why didn't you mind him, Mrs. Smith?" asked Kate.

"Oh! I was obleeged to work, you see, and he didn't want me to."

"You must see him again this morning; you mustn't try his patience in that way again."

"I didn't then, on purpose," replied the poor creature.

"I understand," said her visitor.

Kate was afraid of fatiguing her too much, but felt she must speak to her upon that subject which makes all others appear insignificant in comparison. She must ask her about her hopes for eternity. She knew that the poor soul must soon enter upon its untried realities, and she begged her to look to our dear Redeemer alone for help and pardon.

The woman said that her priest would administer extreme unction if she grew worse; that he had been to see her.

"You want a Saviour, my friend, that will go with you to the bar of your Maker. Look to Jesus alone for forgiveness. Trust simply upon his word; he has promised

to save all who forsake their sins, and go to him, believing he is able and willing to save."

"Is he better than the priest?"

"Yes, he is a mighty Saviour. Will you not look to him in prayer? Will you not ask him to forgive and bless you?"

"I will try to," answered the invalid.

Kate said no more at that time. The physician, who had been summoned, came in, and after examining the case, and prescribing such medicines as he thought would add to her comfort, left, — followed by the young lady who had sent for him, and who asked his opinion of the case as soon as they were out of danger of being heard by either Mrs. Smith or her neighbor. The doctor thought the woman past recovery.

"She has been too long neglected," said he.

"I did not know of her until yesterday," replied Kate.

"Had you, or any other friend, she might have lived. There are many lives shortened by want of consideration. This woman was obliged either to beg or work, when her health was sinking every day. She chose the latter. I tell you, Miss Felton, a man in my profession, that reflects much, can't help seeing that the golden rule is too much forgotten in this world. Self is loved better than our neighbor, the world over."

"Some do obey that rule in part, doctor? Don't you believe so?"

"Yes, a few; I think you are one of the number. But if it were only universally regarded, as it ought to be, this world would become a happy one."

Kate returned home, pondering the truths uttered by

the doctor. She visited Mrs. Smith almost daily, and perceived that her strength failed constantly. Her heart was cheered by the hope that this poor dying creature had chosen Christ for her portion, that there had been joy in heaven over another returning prodigal. Mary sometimes accompanied her friend in these visits, and acknowledged their salutary influence.

One morning these friends went very early to Mrs. Smith's, to carry some little nicety, to tempt if possible her failing appetite, for breakfast. It was an intensely cold morning, but they tripped along with sunny countenances and cheerful hearts. They had hardly closed the door, after entering the house, ere they learned the fact that the sufferer was dying. Mary Winthrop shuddered, and hesitated to advance towards the bed; but Kate impelled her on, and both together they stood by the bedside of the departing soul.

"I wanted you to be here," said the gasping woman at intervals. "I wanted to thank you once more for all you have done. I know you will see to the children when I am dead. My baby is sick now: maybe he will come after me, to that world you have told me about."

"He will follow you some time; but God knows best when he shall go. We will take care of him, and Dora too."

"God is good," said the dying woman, "and Jesus is my Saviour. You told me the way to him, and I bless him for it."

"The praise belongs to him," responded Kate.

The features of the departing one grew brighter, for a moment. She faintly smiled, and raised her eyes to

Heaven; then closed them peacefully, and ceased to breathe.

Mary had looked upon this scene wonderingly. She had never before witnessed any thing like it.

"This is death!" said she.

"It is," replied her friend; "but not death as it is unillumined by the light of the gospel."

Kate, with the assistance of others, whose aid she sought, provided every thing necessary for a decent funeral, which was attended by Mrs. Felton's own minister; the priest not being consulted upon the subject. After the mother was borne to her last resting-place, the baby died; and Kate Felton took Dora to her mother's house. This was a great change to the little girl. She appeared much like a frightened bird. She knew Kate, and loved her; but the furniture and all the surroundings were so novel to her, that it was amusing to watch her observance of the many, to her, wonderful things.

Dora had been born in a hovel, and had never seen a pleasant home. She had run in the streets at will, and been accustomed to associate with the idle and the vicious. Her indistinct recollections of her father were blended with fear. Child as she was, she knew that he was a bad man. Her mother's influence had been scarcely less demoralizing, during the period of her infancy. Some good impressions had been made on her mind by hearing Kate and a good clergyman converse, during her mother's illness. Possessing an inquiring mind, she had listened to all that had been said in her mother's house, and had gathered from what she had heard the truths, that God always saw her, that there were better people than those

among whom she had lived, and that heaven was a place where the wicked are not permitted to enter.

Kate dressed Dora very prettily; and she scarcely looked like the same child who had been found by her, sobbing in the street, a few weeks previous. Dora was surprised, when she looked into one of the large mirrors in Mrs. Felton's parlor, on the day following that on which Kate took her home, and saw herself.

"Miss Kate," said she, "oh do come and see this pretty little girl! She's come to see ye."

Kate could not forbear laughing at the simplicity of the child.

"Dora," said she, "that little girl you see in the glass is yourself."

"Why!" said the little thing, "do I look as pretty as she does?"

"Yes," said her kind friend, "that is only your reflection in the mirror."

"I am glad I'm clean and pretty, like the little girls I see in the street. Shall I be dirty and ragged again?"

"I hope not," replied Kate; "but you must be a good girl, and mind what I say to you."

"You must not play in the streets any more," said Kate to her one day, as she expressed a desire to run out a little while. "You may play in the yard."

It was with some difficulty the poor child was restrained, for a time. Kate found it no easy task to oblige her to conform to a few gentle rules by which she intended to govern her. Sometimes she almost gave up in despair. There was much to be taught her; and, on the other hand, so much to be untaught that she had learned

that was wrong. But prayerful perseverance was rewarded, by slow degrees; and, ere she had been one year at Mrs. Felton's, she had acquired habits of good behaviour, such as many children who are cradled in the arms of pious, loving mothers, might be benefitted by imitating.

When she first saw the carpets on Mrs. Felton's floors, she called them "great painted things." A sofa was a "great long chair;" the crickets, "little tables;" and the statuary, "white children, without clothes:" but now she understood what every thing was called about the house. She had attended school, besides being taught by Kate, at home, to sew, knit, and do many little matters that interested her, and made her useful to the friends she loved so well. On the sabbath, she usually attended church with her friends; and Kate's heart was gladdened by the fact that she soon became, not a hearer only, but a doer, of the precepts of God's word.

In little more than a year after Dora had been adopted into the home of her benefactress, she seemed gradually to lose the elasticity of her spirits. She grew languid, and frequently was found reclining upon her couch, when Kate had thought she was at play.

"Dora, dear, what ails you?" asked this friend, one day, when she had found her lying listlessly upon her little bed. "Are you sick?"

"No, ma'am; I am only tired. It makes me tired to play or do any thing," continued she, rising.

"You may lie still, my dear," said Kate, "and I will have something done to make you feel better, if possible."

"Will you stay with me a little while, if I lie here?" asked the child.

"Yes, dear, if you wish me to."

"I do. I wish to ask about people's dying, and if little girls like me don't die sometimes."

"We must all die, Dora; but none of us can know when. Little children die too. Have you forgotten your little brother?"

"No, ma'am. But do little girls like me die?"

"They do, often. But why do you ask?"

"Because I have been thinking of that beautiful land where there is nothing but what is pleasant and good; where, too, that dear Saviour is, who has always loved me so much as to come down to this world, and be born poor, and suffer, and work hard, and then die, that such a wicked little girl as I am may live for ever and ever and ever."

"Do you think you love that Saviour, Dora?" asked Kate, tenderly.

"I do," said the child, "because I love to think about him. I love to think how happy I shall be to see him, to be near him, and never, oh never! to go out of heaven any more."

"Don't you love to live with me, Dora?"

"O yes, ma'am, very much. I expect you will live in heaven with me, and your mother too. Would you be sorry," she continued, "to have me go there first?"

"No, Dora; but I hope you will stay with us a great while yet. Your Ma Felton loves you as well as I; and we both feel as if we should feel sad to have you taken from us."

"If I go to that happy world where Jesus is, shall you

feel badly? I don't want you to. I hope you will let me go."

"When God calls, we will try to give you up cheerfully; but I trust you will be spared many years to us."

"But I shall go there some time. Don't you believe I shall see all there who love Jesus, and love to do right now?"

"Yes, Dora, some time; but go to sleep now, and then you will rest, and not feel so tired."

Dora closed her eyes, and, smiling languidly, replied,—

"I will try to, and I hope I shall dream about heaven."

Mrs. Felton consulted a physician respecting the child, who prescribed such remedies as he thought might prove efficacious in her case. He recommended riding, and other gentle exercises in the open air. It being spring-time, Dora delighted to ride into the open country, and listen to the songs of the birds as they carolled their notes of praise to their and her Creator. The opening buds and each blade of grass in her eyes had charms, because, as she told Kate one day, when they were riding together, her great and good Father, who lives in heaven, made them all.

With regret Dora's friends saw daily that her strength grew less; and they were obliged to feel, that, to quote the sentiment of a poet,—

"An angel's arm couldn't snatch her from the grave."

Her rides were necessarily made shorter, and she lay upon her couch most of the day. The task of supplying her wants was pleasant. Kate chose it, though Mary Winthrop often begged the favor of being assistant nurse.

Dora was affectionate to all who came near her: she said they were all her dear heavenly Father's children, and she loved them all because he did. She often spoke with gratitude of the cold drizzly day on which she first saw Kate, but always remarked that it was God who had made her so very, very kind to her. Her grateful affection for the friend by whom she had been adopted was ever evident.

"I wish to give Ma Felton and you something to remember me by, when I am gone, but I haven't any thing but what you have given me."

"You shall give us a lock of your hair, Dora, — that will be a dear little keepsake."

"Will it?" asked the child, with glistening eyes.

"It will indeed!"

"Then please take the scissors that are on the table there," said she, pointing to them as she spoke, "and cut off two curls, one for you, and another for Ma Felton."

Kate arose, and, taking the scissors in her hand, approached the bed. Just at that moment Mary Winthrop entered. Seeing what her friend was about to do, she begged the gift of a curl herself.

"I will put it in my locket," said she, as it was handed her by little Dora, who smiled sweetly, then kissed her, and said,—

"You will not forget to meet me in heaven, will you? Think of me whenever you see this hair, and remember I wished you to see me again."

Mary promised to remember what the child had said. She did so, and it resulted in a blessing to her and others.

A day or two after this conversation, Kate and Mary

were sitting in Dora's room. The child had lain in a pleasant doze for some time, and her friends had been perfectly quiet, so that they might not disturb her repose. Suddenly she opened her eyes, and, seeing her most loved friend, said to her,—

"I am glad to have you here now; but where is Ma Felton and Mary? I want them."

The last-mentioned approached her; and Kate went immediately to her mother's room in search of her, but she was not in the house. She returned to the child, who seemed disappointed at not seeing Mrs. Felton. Mary perceiving this, and having noticed that a change was passing over Dora's features, offered to go to the house of a sick friend whom Mrs. Felton had gone to look in upon while her little charge was sleeping.

"Mary," said Dora, "I want to kiss you and say good-by before you go, for I may not be here when you come back. Jesus is going to take me. Let him be your Saviour too!"

Mary kissed the sweet child in return, and hastened from the room to hide her emotion.

"Kate," said the dear little creature, who was now evidently struggling with death, "it is pleasant to go home to our Father in heaven! *Our* Father!" she repeated, "not mine alone: he is Father to all who know him! I wish all the people in the world would come to him, and learn how kind, how good, and how great he is! Oh, it is easy to love him! Don't forget to tell my poor father, if you ever see him, that his own little girl wants him to be a Christian, to love Jesus Christ, and go to heaven, where he will ever be. I have prayed for him. Tell him so."

She had made a great effort to say this; and now she sank quietly upon her pillow, her eyes were closed, and Kate for a minute thought she had ceased to breathe. She however revived, and, clasping her friend's hand, fondly imprinted a long expressive kiss upon her cheek; then said, in a broken whisper, —

"Kiss me! My goodby! Jesus is ready to take me! I love to go!" and immediately fell asleep on the bosom of that Saviour she had loved so well on earth.

This was the story Mr. Marshly had listened to, as it was told him by a disinterested acquaintance of Kate Felton's. It corresponded with what he had seen of her himself, and he felt satisfied, that, if he succeeded in his attempts to win her regard, and make her his, he should have a wife whose price would be "far above rubies," as the wise man has termed a virtuous woman.

We left Kate and her friends taking a pleasant stroll, from which they returned by moonlight. During their walk, Mr. Marshly had found opportunity to ask Kate an important question, which was frankly answered in the negative. This answer, however, did not satisfy the gentleman; and, ere he entered the house on their return, he extorted a promise from Kate that she would grant him a private interview. She kept her promise.

On the following day she met him in the parlor, as he had requested her, and spent more than one hour in trying to convince him that she was really in earnest in saying *no* to him.

"Do, Miss Felton, re-consider the subject!" said her persevering suitor, after she had refused to become his bride a dozen times.

"I have, Mr. Marshly, again and again; and, while I feel bound to thank you for the honor you have done me in choosing me from among the many better fitted for the station you ask me to fill than myself, I must beg you to say no more upon the subject to me, if you wish to preserve my friendship."

"Then, if you propose such cruel conditions, I must submit, for the present at least."

"Not cruel, but kind, my friend. We are not fitted for each other's society well enough to be united in marriage. Neither of us would be happy; our tastes are not congenial, our habits of thought are very dissimilar, and, believe me, you will ere long be convinced of this yourself. I wish to retain your friendship, and no mortal shall ever learn the fact that you have offered me your hand, except from yourself."

Mr. Marshly was obliged to content himself with the thought that Kate might alter her mind, and, telling her he hoped that would be the case ere long, took his leave. Kate breathed more freely when he was gone.

CHAPTER VIII.

"For a letter timely writ is a rivet to the chain of affection." — TUPPER.

MR. MARSHLY did not speak of his disappointment to any one. He felt it too keenly. Yet he respected Kate, even more than before her refusal of his hand. He was vexed at himself for having been so sure of his ground; and he immediately returned home, where a pressure of business awaited him, which was deemed a sufficient excuse for his sudden departure from Groveton. Julia wanted Kate to tell *her* whether he had made her a formal offer of his hand, yet could not bring herself to ask her friend the question she of all others desired to have answered. Even Mrs. Felton was silent upon the subject, rightly supposing Kate would tell her all that was necessary to be made known in regard to the affair. Kate's brother and sister puzzled their brain not a little with conjectures about it; but no one ventured to accuse Kate of want of confidence, because she was silent on the matter of the conversation between Mr. Marshly and herself during their walk on that, to Kate, never-to-be-forgotten evening. Mrs. Upton wished there might be a wedding. She would be delighted to have it to say, when she returned home, that she had made one of the party who celebrated the nuptials of the Hon. C. Marshly and lady. That was as far as this lady was accustomed to reflect. All this time Kate's thoughts reverted oftener to her friend Mary than to any one subject beside. She had

for some weeks been daily expecting to welcome her to Groveton; yet she came not, neither had any letters been received for some time. Both Mrs. Felton and Kate felt anxious to hear from Mary; therefore, it was with great pleasure they saw Jim entering the sitting-room on the day after Mr. Marshly departed, bearing a waiter upon which he had placed quite a number of letters. Jim Crow, as he was nicknamed by almost all the people upon the plantation, approached Mrs. Felton first. She immediately took up a letter the superscription of which she knew to be in the handwriting of Mary Winthrop. Its post-mark told of its needlessly long journey. Kate received it from her mother, who said, as she gave it to her, —

"Daughter, I am impatient to know its contents!"

They were soon revealed. Mary had been disappointed in her long-cherished wish to visit Groveton by illness. She had been quite sick, and must postpone her visit to some future season. She would, she said, have written sooner, only she had been too feeble, and she hated to employ an amanuensis: —

"I have felt very anxious to write you, in order to ask why you withheld from your unworthy friend Mary the news that has reached me through the medium of strangers. If I had engaged myself to any gentleman, even were he only one-half as honorable as your Mr. Marshly, I should have informed you of the fact with the least possible delay. I have thought that it might be possible, however, that you intended to surprise me, upon my arrival at Groveton, with a great nuptial parade. Kate, I will not be selfish. I have been schooling my heart ever since I heard that you were to settle in life so far from me, if, mayhap, by so doing I can make it willing to have this so. I will, I must, I do sincerely congratulate you upon your brilliant prospects, though it is hard to make my heart quiet; it will throb with pain when

I reflect that you are to reside in Rosefield no more. Answer soon. Tell me if it be true that Mr. Marshly has offered himself to you, — I know you will, — and relieve the anxiety of your devoted friend,

"MARY."

When Kate read aloud this part of Mary's letter to her mother, both mother and daughter were amused. They could not imagine how such a report had been circulated. Mrs. Felton remembered seeing Mr. Marshly's attentions to Kate had been noticed, particularly by some of the company at Mr. Easyside's, who, she was aware, remarked upon it; and she concluded it must be this that had given rise to the story that had reached Mary Winthrop.

"I will write to Mary immediately. The dear girl must by this time be looking for an answer to hers, which has been so long on its way."

So saying, Kate went to her own room, where she found Susan engaged with some simple embroidery-work that the girl had chosen to do privately, in order to surprise Kate with her progress.

"Now," said Susan, going towards her friend, "I am found out. I meant to have finished this strip before you knew it."

Kate smiled.

"Who commenced that work for you, Susan?"

"Emma did, and gave me the cloth and nun's cotton too."

"Well, go on with your work. I'll not tell Mrs. Felton nor any one else, if you don't want me to," said Kate. "I shall not disturb you. I am going to be busy writing."

"Will my staying here disturb you, Miss Kate?"

"No, dear, — not at all."

Kate at once sat down, opened her writing-desk, and began the following letter to her friend:—

"GROVETON, April 27, 18—.

"Dear Mary,—Your very acceptable letter has just reached me. It incited me both to weep and be merry. I grieve at your illness, and the disappointment it has occasioned *me*, as well as yourself and others. I have desired your coming greatly, fondly,—I fear too much. It would have been so pleasant to have seen you here, and had your company on our return-journey, which, if all things are equal, we shall take in about a fortnight. I long to see you. I have a great deal to communicate to your partial ear. I cannot write the half you must know; but I will tell you that I am still disengaged. I know not upon what the rumor you heard is founded, but I do know that I am under no obligations of a matrimonial nature to any gentleman whatever. Perhaps I shall never be married. I never saw but one person whom I thought I could reverence as a husband ought to be by a wife. This one, I think, merited the highest possible respect. But I must stop thinking aloud, or you will laugh at my folly in being interested in a person who perhaps has never had a thought of me since we providentially met while travelling. You, Mary, believe in the attraction of congenial spirits to each other, else I would not have said this much. You ask me if I have had an offer of marriage. By this you astonish me. You surely, when in your right mind, cannot believe that I would reveal the secret entrusted me by another, which would have been, had Mr. Marshly or any other gentleman offered me his hand in wedlock. Were I to receive a dozen offers of the kind, no mortal should know it by my means. It would degrade me in my own opinion to be guilty of such a meanness. If a gentleman offers a lady his heart and hand, he honors her in so doing above all other women of his acquaintance he entrusts her with the secret of his feelings. And how, I ask, should she treat his confidence, if she cannot return his affection?

"'Not lightly,' I think I hear you say. Certainly not. Neither should she ever make the affair a subject of conversation, not even with her nearest friends. I pity those who make light of love-matters, especially of those persons who are in this regard disappointed. It betokens to my mind a want of noble, generous feeling. Love is a reality,—a sacred one too. I mean not here passion,—its foe, as one writer

has it; but affection, — such as Heaven has bestowed upon us, among its choicest blessings, to gild the gloominess of earth. It is not degrading to cherish affection. I would not live without loving or being loved; and I have yet to learn why contumely must, by conventional usage, assail the individual who betrays this best of feelings, if it fails of meeting a response from the person towards whom it is cherished. Shame on such heartlessness! I say; while I rejoice that there are multitudes of hearts enshrined under the folds of conventionalities that hang but loosely about them. I must pause. I am making my letter too long.

. . . . . .

"Mother's kind remembrance, and my love, is yours, dear Mary. In about three weeks, at the longest, I promise myself the pleasure of presenting to you my *protégé*, Susan. You are already familiar with her name, and the circumstances under which she came to be my charge. Please remember my love to all inquirers. And believe me, without change, your loving "KATE."

This letter was sent to the post-office as soon as it was written, that it might be to Mary the harbinger of the coming of its writer. The little time preceding the departure of Mrs. Felton and Kate seemed even shorter than it was in reality, — there was so much to be done; so many little things to remember for the comfort of others; so many little mementoes to prepare for the people belonging to the plantation, to whom Kate had endeared herself by kindness. All regretted the departure of the ladies, but none expressed so much real sorrow as Ruthy and her daughter.

"'Pears like I'se never git over it arter ye's done gone. Missus is dat kind; but she dun no how ter be like ye, no how."

"I'll feel dat lonesome," said Lucy, "when ye's done comin' in ter de cabin ter talk an' read ter me. Ye's been dat kind, and I shall allers love yer, I know I shall."

"Pray for me when I am away," said Kate; "it will do us both good."

"It ain't fit for de likes of me, any how, ter pray for de likes of ye. I love ter have yer pra'rs for mesef and poor ole mudder."

"You shall have them, Lucy; and if, as you hope, you love *our* blessed Saviour, you are fit to pray for me or any one else. I should feel blessed by your prayers, and hope I shall always have them."

"Yer shall," sobbed Ruthy; "but ye'll never cum here agin."

Kate assured her, that, if no unforeseen circumstances should prevent, she should spend the next winter with them. This cheered the poor old affectionate creature, whose attachment to Kate had been gaining in strength since the hour that Frank first introduced the latter to the kitchen.

Mrs. Upton left the plantation about ten days before the others. Julia was to leave in a day or two after they were gone. She was most affectionately invited by Mrs. Felton and Kate to visit them, during the warm season, at Rosefield; while Susan was kindly invited, by all the family, to come with her friends when they next came. This was very pleasing to Kate; for she had learned the fact that her *protégé* was possessed of keen susceptibilities, and that she longed for affection and kindness above all things else. Mrs. Wilkins was sorry to have her new friend go away; but it was evident she felt proud of having her daughter accompany her.

Mr. Felton would not consent that his relatives should go without his protection, as far as New York at least.

This was a comfort to his mother. Her goodby to him could be postponed some little time, and she felt it a sad task to say the word to the rest; but it must be said, — they would not be satisfied with less.

The carriage that conveyed these friends to the stage-road was followed some little distance by rather a motley crowd, all of which were eager to catch a last look or smile from one who had been such a light in their pathway as had the friend now leaving them. Emma, Rosa, and Frank were cheered by an assurance from their father, that they should go with him, on the return of cold weather, to accompany their grandmother and aunt to Groveton, — an event they looked forward to with delight.

It was with emotion that could not be concealed, that Kate made her adieus. Hers was one of those tender, loving hearts one is compelled to wish more common in the world. Jim, at parting, had given her a bouquet of beautiful flowers, that had been cultivated by himself and Jake; and they were elegant, if not arranged with peculiar taste. Kate valued the gift highly. She saw in it a feeling she loved; and she sighed to think that the fetters of slavery were fastened upon the givers. Mentally she asked our Father in heaven to give to each of his creatures the blessings of freedom.

"Kate," asked her brother, "who arranged that bouquet for you?"

"Jim and Jake," she replied. "Without any knowledge of the language of flowers, they have chosen well. Nature's teaching has been perfect. Here are roses, geraniums, heliotropes, telling of love and devotion; while these

modest lillies of the valley speak of the diffidence with which they were presented. There is considerable of worth covered up by that old glossy cap of Jim's. He has good parts. I wish he could be in a situation to make the most of himself."

"I wish he was, too, Kate. To be honest, I don't like to be a holder of slaves. But," he continued, "I wish you to tell me, mother and sister both, if you don't think better of the system than before you came here."

"For myself," said his mother, "I must say, that to me it is the same hideous monster. Make the chains of gold, if you please: it may make them a trifle less heavy; but they will clank, and secure those who wear them from the enjoyment of freedom."

"But most of them are contented, and would not leave their owners if they might," replied Mr. Felton. "Here is Simon, my coachman, he seems really proud of his situation."

"He might be free, and still be your coachman," said Kate, who had, until then, only smiled her approval of her mother's remarks. What my heart desires for all, colored or white people, is the privilege of free agency. No man has a right to usurp the responsibility of the acts of his fellows."

"Well," said her brother, "I trust the time will come when your wishes in this respect will be gratified, and our country be more than nominally free."

"Heaven grant it may!" responded Mrs. Felton; "for I am ashamed of her now. I love my country, and feel her disgrace as attached to myself."

"I am aware that we are very ridiculous," said Mr.

Felton. "It is useless to deny this. In our case, it is too true that 'the fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge.'"

"We must not rest satisfied," remarked Kate, "until we get our teeth in a more agreeable condition. We are inexcusable if we do not; because *we* are free agents."

Her brother assented; and many incidents, brought to mind by objects that were seen during even their short ride to the stage-house, strengthened her belief in the wrongs of oppression. A slave-driver was visible, with his abominable whip, at one time, — the first such whip our northern friends had ever seen. At a short distance from this man, they beheld the agonized parting of a mother and child. The latter was to be driven away by the wielder of the whip, and separated from a fond parent for ever.

"Gracious Heaven," exclaimed Mrs. Felton, "forbid that this state of things be continued! Let not my fellow-mortals thus degrade themselves, and set at naught the precepts of their Redeemer!"

It was some time ere Mrs. Felton and Kate recovered from the shock their feelings had sustained at this sight, so as to converse again. It has been remarked, that the contemplation of a distant object has a more powerful effect upon the mind than its presence. It is not thus with such things as our friends beheld that morning. At a distance, they are revolting; near, they are not only that, but heart-rending, heart-sickening.

The ride in the old stage-coach was a very pleasant one, there was so much on every side to delight the eye. The thoughts of our party were mostly engaged with

the lovely scenery they passed. This made them almost indifferent to their immediate surroundings. It mattered but little to them whether their fellow-passengers were persons with tastes congenial to their own, or whether they were drowsily enduring the ride as comfortably as they could under the jolting circumstances. Kate noticed a comparatively large number of drooping eyelids among the company. The thought had intruded itself, ere she commenced this journey, that the owner of the threadbare coat might possibly cross her path again; but she looked in vain for him there. Few words were spoken during the last part of this ride, for all were occupied too entirely by gazing at the vernal prospect that surrounded them. The steamboat travelling was more pleasant at this time than when they took their journey in the autumn.

Susan, who had never seen a steamer before, enjoyed the trip more than any of the party; in fact, she enjoyed and admired so much that she saw, and so intensely too, that her friends were afraid the excitement might injure her health. As they proceeded on, and exchanged the steamboat and coaches for the cars, Susan wondered what next would present itself that was wonderful.

"What other way shall we go?" asked she of Kate.

"We shall only take the steamboat once more," said Kate, "before we end our journey; but travel in cars, alternated with short rides in coaches, all the rest of the way."

"Do they call this riding? I should think it flying, some of the time."

"Don't you like it, Susan?" asked Mr. Felton.

"I should, if I did not care to see the country; but I do, and wish the trees would not whirl along so."

"It is ourselves that do the whirling, Susan. We leave the trees just where we find them."

Susan seemed amused, and made herself as comfortahle as she could; but it was evident that she did not admire the lightning-speed of the railway. Without stopping long at New York or Albany, the travellers reached Rosefield in safety in about ten days after they left Groveton. Mr. Felton accompanied his mother and sister all the way; for, although he had business to attend to in New York that was urgent, he could not forego the pleasure of spending one night in the home of his childhood. To be once more under the roof that sheltered his boyhood, and see about him the old familiar surroundings; to hear his name pronounced by the voice of an aged domestic, whose kind, pleasant face was among those items first recorded on memory's pages, — was joy indeed to him. The whole party was welcomed most heartily by the housekeeper, and by Mary Winthrop, who had for several successive days awaited her friends' arrival at the depot. It was joy indeed to good old Maggie to see her dear, dear, very dear Mrs. Felton and Kate, as she expressed herself; and she bustled about, in her quiet way of bustling, to have supper immediately after they arrived.

"I've made some nice muffins," said the good soul; "for I thought, perhaps, Mr. John would come with you, and I haven't forgotten how he used to love them."

"You are very thoughtful of me, and kind too, Maggie," replied the gentleman.

"I have never forgotten you, Mr. John, nor forgot to pray for you either, that you might not be a cruel slaveholder; for I have been afraid you would."

"You don't like slavery then, Maggie, better than you used to, — do you?" said Mr. Felton.

"Like it better! No, indeed! The more I read my Bible, the plainer I see it is a great sin, — killing both master and slave! I think any one that loves the word of God must hate the sin of slavery."

"I think so too," replied the gentleman. "Still, I am so situated, I don't know what to do."

"Do right!" responded the homely, Christian woman, with energy: "that is the safest course to take."

"I am resolved to find out what right is in this case," remarked Mr. Felton.

Susan was introduced as a young girl in whom Mrs. Felton and her daughter felt much interested, and they brought her home, that she might be educated properly. No detailed account was ever given of her previous degradation. Her parents were left at the South, doing even better than Kate had ever dared to hope. She had no need now to feel ashamed of them; she could speak to her dearest friend with freedom and pleasure. The downcast look that Susan had formerly worn had disappeared almost entirely. Her heart was light, for she was happy; and her countenance was one of that tell-tale class of countenances that betrayed every feeling. Her friends enjoyed seeing her, as she made discoveries of such things as were curiosities to her untaught eye. Out of doors, all she saw was novel. The trees were laden with blossoms, but they did not look exactly like those upon which she had been accustomed to gaze; they were fragrant and beautiful, but it was another kind of beauty than that she had looked for. Good old Jacob, the gardener, was at

work on the flower-beds. Several kinds of early flowers were exhibiting their grace and loveliness, and, contrasted with the pretty squares of green grass near the house, that were neatly kept and surrounded with box, gave to the front-door yard an appearance of vernal beauty that quite charmed the southern young lady. As it began to grow dark, the air became somewhat cool; and the little party gathered in the parlor, where a little warm air was admitted from the furnace. Mrs. Felton drew near the register to warm her feet. Susan looked on amazed.

"Where does that hole lead to?" asked she.

"Down cellar, to the furnace," replied Kate. "A pipe conducts the heat into the room from thence."

"Does that warm the room enough in cold weather?" asked Susan.

"It does. I will show you how it is done, some day. I am glad to have you notice particularly whatever comes under your observation. By so doing, you will acquire much knowledge that will be useful."

Mr. Felton did not remain long in one place. He roamed over the house. Not a room, not a cupboard, but he explored. Every piece of crockery or pewter ware that had been familiar to his vision in childhood was handled, and carefully examined, to see if any marks of decay were visible upon them. And with pleasure he remarked their state of preservation; for those old articles were dear to him, very dear, from association. The stable and other out-buildings were visited; and the sight of various things, relics of former days, caused him both to smile and sigh. No one part of the dear old homestead was neglected. He had looked upon every thing, and

uttered all his adieus, ere eight o'clock the next morning arrived; and, having promised to come again as early as possible in the fall, was being carried with locomotive speed over the road that led to his home. Their return home was a season of enjoyment to Mrs. Felton, even more than to her daughter. Her health permitted her to go abroad more than she had been able to do the preceding year. This constituted much of her happiness.

Susan often went out with her, when out of school, and soon became acquainted with places and things around the spot that she now delighted to call home. She had obtained the consent of her friends, and had added to her name that of Felton. This was to her the dearest, sweetest name she had ever heard. "Susan Wilkins Felton" was written upon a blank leaf in all her books, and marked upon her clothing. Unwearied pains had been taken, by Kate, to impress upon the mind of Susan a sense of obligation to her heavenly Father, for having taken her, in his kind, unerring providence, from the state of degradation in which she had been born.

"Never for one moment, my dear girl, allow a feeling of exultation to be cherished in your breast," said Kate, "over those who are still in the miserable condition from which you have been saved. Humility, not pride, becomes both you and me. We possess no one blessing that God has not given us, and we have nothing but what we have received from him. He it is that hath made us differ from others; and we should evince our gratitude to him by employing the gifts he has bestowed upon us to do good to our fellow-beings. We should not look down upon any of our Father's family."

It was pleasant to see the improvement Susan made, it was so rapid. As has been remarked, she was possessed of uncommon powers of imitation. These were serviceable in saving her from many awkward blunders, that another, reared to the age she had been amid coarseness, and even worse than that, would have committed. Love seemed to impart vigor to her intellectual powers. She acquired knowledge with ease. Her talent for drawing was cultivated, not as a task, but for recreation. She was fond of music; but Kate did not allow her to spend much time in acquiring a knowledge of the science, until she had progressed considerably in her other studies. Mary Winthrop became interested in her friend's *protégé*, and was quite a valuable assistant in teaching her those one thousand and more little things a young girl needs to be taught.

Mary's curiosity was never gratified in regard to Kate's receiving an offer from Mr. Marshly; and she was obliged to be content with knowing that she was the unchanged companion who had been the sunshine of her orphan life. She thanked Kate for her letter, and the hints it contained.

"That letter I shall never part with," she said, at one time, to Mrs. Felton, to whom she had been reading it. "It has made me love our dear Kate more than ever."

CHAPTER IX.

"Small bliss is theirs whom fate's too heavy hand
Confines through life to some small speck of land."

THE warm season glided pleasantly away to our friends at Rosefield. Towards its close, Julia Abbott made them a short visit. She then proceeded farther north, with her father. Some things she saw in New England delighted her, while some disgusted; and, as she took little care to prevent her feelings from being known, it was plain to see her annoyance at table, if a wayward fly presumed to light upon any article of food of which she cared to partake. She thought the people intolerably indifferent to these winged troubles, and wondered her friends did not station a servant on each side of the table, armed with a long feather, to intimidate them at their approach. Susan seemed a prodigy in her eyes. She never could have believed that the interesting girl, moving so gracefully about Mrs. Felton's house, was a poor white squatter's daughter. When she expressed this opinion to Kate, that friend replied, —

"I doubt not, Julia, but there are more intellectual diamonds at the South, that only need to be dug out and polished. You may find one, Julia, if you search but just a little."

Julia thought herself excused from such disagreeable duties as looking after poor girls. They were not to her taste in any wise, but she liked to see the pleasant results of others' efforts. Like too many, she wished this world

was more moral than it is; but she shrunk from adding her mite of labor towards its improvement, forgetful of the fact that each individual, however low in condition, helps make this state of existence what it is.

November arrived in that year ere Mr. Felton and his family were able to reach Rosefield. They had been detained by different causes, — trifling, all of them. In consequence of their late arrival, their stay was limited to a very few days; but these were happy days, especially to the young people.

Mary Winthrop was cordially invited to make one of the party on their return South, an invitation she gladly accepted. Mrs. Felton's health was more firm now than on the preceding year. This was a matter of thankfulness, as it would make her journeyings more pleasant. In short, a happier party never were found than the one which left Mrs. Felton's, in Rosefield, upon the second week in November, to seek a home at the sunny South. No event of much interest occurred during this journey; neither was the winter marked by any thing of importance. Pleasant days and tranquil nights rapidly succeeded each other. Something was enjoyed in the way of giving and making parties, but not much time was spent thus. Riding was a favorite amusement with all the younger members of the family. Horseback-riding had the preference with most of them. Susan learned to ride as easily as she learned almost every thing she attempted, and her companionship was prized by all on the plantation. Even Jake and Jim had learned to respect her, for she was ladylike and kind towards them. Jim confessed he was not ashamed to raise his cap when he met her.

"There aa'nt a hansummer one 'bout than she's got to be," said Jake. "Jist look at her curls, they's butiful. Sartin Miss Emma's ain't so perty 's hern be."

Jim fully concurred in this opinion. Susan gladdened Kate's heart by the tenderness of conscience she manifested, and her gentle deportment. It seemed strangely sweet in one like her.

One day, during the month of March of that year, her father came to the house and requested an interview with Kate. This being granted, he informed her, that, during the whole of the past winter, himself and wife had been making preparations to remove to the West.

"We are 'bout ready," said he, "and I hope you'll think well of our going."

"I do," said Kate. "You must have done with the whiskey-jug, or you would not have got along so well. I thought you would keep that pledge if you once made it."

"Your kindness has been the making on us, Miss Felton. I don't touch no kind of liquor, nor I don't want ter."

"I am very glad, Mr. Wilkins; but when do you intend starting for the West?"

"By the last of next week; that'll bring it to about the middle, or little past, of the month. It'll be high time to be on the spot, if a body's going to farm it, by the time we get there."

"You are correct in that, my friend; and I hope you will have a prosperous journey, and be successful ever after you reach the place to which you are bound. But what place do you intend to settle at?"

"I can't tell, ye see, 'till I gits there."

"Well, wherever it is, you will do better if you seek the blessing of God upon your labors. Remember, it will profit little to gain the world and forget him."

"I think of that a good deal, Miss Felton. I want to get right."

"It is easy, if you only will."

"I hope I shan't forget," responded he. "I s'pose I might as well say good-by to Sukey, seein's I'm going off so far; and I'll be too busy next week, I reckon, till I git away."

A servant was sent to call Susan, who came immediately. Her father was evidently taken by surprise with her personal appearance. She was much taller than when he last saw her, — she was handsomer too; and her manners were so much improved, that the rough father seemed awestruck when he first looked at her.

"How she's altered!" said he. "I never'd thought she belonged to me once."

"She belongs to you now, Mr. Wilkins," replied Kate. "I shall not prevent her going away with you, if she chooses; still, I should greatly prefer her remaining with me. Do you wish to go, or would you rather stay, Susan?" Kate asked, as the girl stood regarding her father with an earnest expression of countenance, which seemed to speak volumes of interest in her parent's welfare.

"I would like best to stay," answered she, "if I may; that is, if you are all satisfied with that."

"I am," said her father. "I came to bid you good-by, 'cause I'm afeard I shan't have time next week, if we start Tuesday, as I 'spect we shall;" and he hesitated. "Miss Felton knows 'bout it, and I may as well say it

afore her. I's sorry I 'greed to sell ye to that slave-driver, and want you to forgive me, Susan."

The daughter burst into tears.

"Don't speak of it, father!" sobbed she. "I don't remember it, and I don't wish you to."

This was true. Her heart was too full of Christian love to think unkindly of any wrong that had ever been done her. She loved the reform commenced in her once wretched father, and her feelings were overcome by the acknowledgment he made.

On Monday of the ensuing week, her mother, brother, and sister took their leave of Susan. They expressed the opinion that she was not fit now to work on a farm; and such was the fact. She was more at home amid the refinement of the family into which she had been adopted, with *her* tastes, than she could possibly have been, subjected to the rough-and-tumble of emigrant life at the West.

The departure of this poor family was a source of satisfaction to the generous heart of her who had labored so much for their good. They carried with them Bibles, and other good books, which the wife and mother had learned to read, and which Kate had given them; and their removal promised fair to make them useful and happy, at least compared with their previous state.

Julia visited Groveton ere the Feltons returned North. Mr. Marshly, too, favored them with a short visit, — if it was indeed a favor to each of them; but this was doubtful, as far as one was concerned. He convinced Kate that "hope deferred" had not made *his* "heart sick," by renewing his request of the previous year. She decidedly

said *no;* and reminded him of the fact that a gentleman never would be over-importunate after having been once refused. Her deportment during his stay, while it increased his admiration of her character, extinguished the hope that she would ever be his.

May came, as on the past year, all too soon for those who were to leave the Feltons. For themselves, however, they were gratified at the prospect of soon being in their own dear home. The winter had been spent in enjoyment of different kinds; and still, even to Mary Winthrop, they were glad when they found themselves again upon their homeward journey. They found good old Maggie expecting them anxiously, with every thing arranged for their comfort.

"I do say now, Miss Felton, if you only knowed how long the winter is when you're gone, you wouldn't stay so long away from me."

Miss Felton comforted the faithful creature by assuring her that she expected to shorten her stay, if she should leave home another year.

"That'll be better," said Maggie; "I s'pose you'll only be away when the weather is coldest, then."

"That will be all," answered the lady.

"I'm glad of that," was Maggie's reply, as she proceeded to acquaint the ladies with much that had occurred during their absence.

"You are missed, I can tell you, when you are away. The folks talk about you a great deal, and say they want you to come back."

"I should be sorry if we were such nonentities as not to be missed," said Mrs. Felton.

"Or," said Kate, archly, "so naughty, that our absence should be hailed by our acquaintance as a relief."

Maggie laughingly said there was no danger of any such thing as that.

Kate and Mary had scarcely made what visits they intended, and arranged other little matters to be attended to after an absence of months, ere they received a pressing invitation to spend a few weeks with a friend in New York city. Kate hesitated at first to accept the invitation, feeling reluctant to leave her mother. Mrs. Felton, however, urged her to go; and she went, after arranging every thing necessary for her mother's and Susan's comfort during her absence. Susan attended school, but, when at home, was companionable, and really a solace to her kind benefactress. She made herself useful in various ways, and never was more happy than when assisting Mrs. Felton in doing some things which Kate had formerly been accustomed to do for her mother.

"You are a good daughter," said Mary to her friend, after they were on their way to New York. "I do believe you won't take half the comfort that you would if your mother was going with us."

"I don't believe I shall take quite as much," answered Kate; "for I am so accustomed to caring for her feeble health, I cannot get rid of the anxiety. Her health is better, it is true, than it has been for years; still, I don't love to be separated from her, and dread no one affliction that can come to me like her removal from earth."

"She is a good mother," responded Mary; "I wish I had one like her."

The friends reached the end of their journey without

experiencing any thing out of the usual course. Still, they felt they had much to be grateful for, in this age of accidents, for having escaped with perfect soundness of body and limbs, and from dangers unseen both on land and water. The reception they met was highly gratifying. Their friends, Mr. and Mrs. Fielding, were young persons who lived in an independent style, and gathered around them every comfort and luxury that nature and art had provided. Their home was located on Fifth Avenue. Their house was one of the most spacious and superbly furnished mansions in the city, and, upon each reception-day, well-nigh crowded with genteel guests. Kate and Mary were in a very few days introduced to most of the *élite* of New York.

"I suspect," said Mr. Fielding one morning at breakfast, addressing Kate, "that you and your friend have left your hearts at Rosefield."

"Why," asked both young ladies in a breath, "do you think so?"

"Oh! because neither of you seem particularly interested in any of the gentlemen you meet here."

"I like to converse with most that have been presented to me," replied Kate.

"That may be," answered the gentleman; "but you don't seem very desirous of pleasing any *one* of them."

"True, I do not; why should I?"

"Because most young ladies would feel highly complimented by the attentions of such gentlemen as Mr. Strasburg and Mr. Aiken; while you receive them with as little perturbation as if they were not worth more than passing thought."

"To me they are not. I don't, of course, speak for Mary."

"Her heart is untouched as well as Kate's," remarked Mrs. Fielding, with a smile. "Is not this assertion true, Mary?"

"I believe it is," was the reply.

"Have you and Mary pledged yourselves to a life of single blessedness, Kate?" asked Mr. Fielding.

"We have not exactly done that; we have only determined to wait patiently until the right ones make their appearance, as they undoubtedly will, on some auspicious day in the bright future."

"That day ought not to be far distant to you, Kate," said Mrs. Fielding.

"You need not presume too much upon my good-nature, my friend," said Kate, laughing. "I may get angry at being reminded of my near approach to a doubtful age; though, to be serious, I do not shrink from the thought of a single life. It is not disreputable, and, to my mind, vastly preferable to that led by one-half of those early married in the world."

"I have just thought, my dear," said Mr. Fielding to his wife, "of a gentleman that would probably suit Kate, and that is Dr. Stonely."

"I agree with you in that opinion," replied the lady. "I think, too, that she might suit his fastidious taste."

"Who is Dr. Stonely?" inquired Mary.

"A very popular physician, and a perfect gentleman; besides being a Christian, and possessing every desirable qualification in a partner for life," answered Mr. Fielding

"Is he a resident of this city?" asked Kate.

"He is, and has been during the last two years; and his popularity has increased every day since he established himself among us. He is a favorite, too, among those of his own profession. I want you to see him, Kate. If he ever had a moment's leisure, you would see him at our house."

"Invite him to come, especially before we leave; can-you not, Mr. Fielding?" asked Mary.

"I can, and I will," answered the gentleman. "But to get him here will be quite another affair. He might even enter the door, and be obliged to turn back and go to some case of suffering that would detain him for hours."

"That is too bad!" exclaimed Mary. "I'm not going to be a physician's wife, I know."

"Do you say the same, Kate?" asked Mrs. Fielding.

"I do not. If I might be useful as the wife of a good doctor, whose society, what little I should have of it, I could like, I could have no possible objection to a husband of that profession."

"Well, I hope Dr. Stonely will be able to give us a call," said Mary, somewhat archly. "I suspect he will prove to be the very one for whom 'Katy darling,' here, has been waiting."

Kate laughed good-naturedly at these vivacious remarks, and so did the rest of the company. The fortnight that had been allotted to the stay of the young ladies in New York soon passed. During the time, Dr. Stonely, although he more than once made the attempt, failed to visit his friends, the Fieldings. In fact, it was of little use for him to even

think of visiting, his time was so constantly occupied with professional duties.

Kate acknowledged to herself that this was a disappointment. She had hoped to see the gentleman who, in her own mind, was associated with her travelling friend of the threadbare coat. She felt there was a similarity in their character, as she had heard that of Dr. Stonely described by her friends. She had been informed, too, that he was a widower, and a young man. But she would not allow herself to indulge in regrets. She schooled her heart to quietude.

"Why should I," she asked herself, "think so often of a stranger, when my judgment of him may be hasty and incorrect? I will dismiss his image from my thoughts. If it is best that I see him again, He that notices even the fall of a sparrow will so order events that this shall be."

Kate's mind was thus freed from all anxiety on this point. She felt soothed, in casting all her cares on God; and felt the power of the kind assurance that he cared for her. In her own strength, she did not attempt any thing; for she had learned the efficacy of prayer.

Their visit being ended, Kate and Mary took passage in a steamer for Albany, on their return home. Their friends, Mr. Fielding and his lady, accompanied them to the boat, and remained on deck until the steamer weighed anchor. They then stood upon the pier, watching them until they receded far from land. Kate and Mary waved their handkerchiefs as long as they could be distinguished; and continued standing by the bulwark, and enjoying the prospect before them, until weary of gazing. Turning suddenly round to seek a seat in the saloon, they met a

gentleman, whom Kate at a glance recognized as Mr. Marshly, from the South. He had met her friend Mary twice at Mr. Felton's, in Virginia; and he knew both ladies at first sight. He extended his hand, and greeted them with great cordiality and politeness. His manner towards Kate was too frank and unrestrained to leave room for a thought that she was not taken at her word by him at last. This, to her, was gratifying; and she was agreeably surprised to find he was to bear them company on their trip homeward. He was social, polite, and very respectful, towards both ladies; but in his manner towards her friend, Kate was sure she discovered a something that told of a feeling allied to preference. She noticed with interest the effect of his attentions upon Mary, and was satisfied that they were well received.

They conversed together, and seemed so well pleased, too, with each other's society, that Kate had an opportunity to look about among the passengers for something to interest her. In a few moments, her eyes met those of a little girl, richly, though plainly dressed; and, in her strikingly handsome features, she thought she saw the expression of the little girl whose father had been such an object of interest to her since the time she met the child and himself, nearly two years before. She longed to know the name of the little stranger, whom she now saw, but knew not exactly how to obtain the desired knowledge. The child — for she was still a child, although considerably taller than when first seen by Kate — was not alone now, but under the protection of a lady, whom, upon making inquiry, she learned was known to Mary Winthrop.

"Is that child a relative of hers?" asked Kate.

"I don't know," replied Mary. "But the lady is a Mrs. Dinsmore, and a most excellent woman, too. I would like to give you an introduction to her. Come, let us walk toward them."

Kate readily acceded to this proposal. As they approached that part of the boat, the little girl said to Mrs. Dinsmore, —

"That lady coming this way is the one I saw and loved so well, some time ago, when I went from Rosefield to Albany."

Mrs. Dinsmore was thus prepared to give Kate a most cordial greeting, when presented to that lady by her friend. She then introduced her cousin's little daughter, Carrie Stonely. Carrie immediately asked Kate if she was not the same lady she had seen in the cars, nearly two years before.

"I am," replied she. "And I feel very glad to meet you again. Are you going to stop at Rosefield?"

"No, ma'am, at Hilltown, six miles beyond," answered Carrie. "Are you acquainted in that place?"

"Very little," said Kate. "But I presume you do not reside in Hilltown?"

"I do not. My home is in New York."

"Is Dr. Stonely your father?"

"Yes, ma'am. Do you remember riding in the cars with him?"

"I do."

"I am glad," replied Carrie, with a perfect artlessness of manner that was delightful; "because he has not forgotten you. I have heard him say that your conversation

at that time did him good. He was feeling sad and depressed, he told me the other day, and he said you seemed like a sunbeam in his path. He would like to see your mother, and you too, I know," said the child, as she paused to take breath.

During this unsophisticated harangue of Carrie, Kate felt her cheeks suffused with crimson. This was unobserved by all but Mary, who was as watchful over the affairs of her friend's heart as that friend was over hers. This solicitude was mutual. Mary was truly glad that the identity of Kate's travelling-acquaintance and favorite was established. She congratulated her friend upon her gift of intuitive perception of character.

"To think," said she, "that you, Kate, should have set that gentleman down in your own mind for just such a person as he is, at first sight, almost seems strange to me. I don't understand how you read countenances so like a book. I shall have to employ you to do some such reading for me."

"I have already employed my powers without being requested," answered Kate.

"What do you make out?" asked her friend.

"A pretty fair character, — if that is what you mean. I have told you as much before."

"Let me ask, did you think him good enough for yourself?"

"Certainly I did."

"That is all I wish to inquire at present," said Mary.

The two friends, who had been left alone a few moments while Mr. Marshly was engaged with a gentleman he had

met upon deck, and Mrs. Dinsmore and Carrie were occupied in conversing with some acquaintances that had just espied them, now joined these friends. They engaged in pleasant conversation; and the time passed quickly to them, — so swiftly that they neared the wharf at Albany, ere they were aware of the fact that so much of their journey was accomplished.

Mr. Marshly informed the ladies, on their arrival, that he was to stop with a friend who resided in the same neighborhood with those friends at whose house Kate and Mary were to tarry during the night. The ride from the steamer thither was made more pleasant by his kind attentions and cheerful presence. The journey on the day following was much like car-journeyings in general. The same motley group crowded the seats as on other days. Men, women, and children composed this crowd, — some large, some small, but far the largest number were of medium stature; some good-natured and polite, while others seemed to think the whole world was made expressly for their accommodation. Among this number were some gentlemen, who seated themselves, after having thrown away the last relic of a cigar, that could not be allowed in this travelling saloon. As the rules of the corporation did not exclude perfumery, they solaced themselves by bringing enough in their clothes to regale the senses of a multitude.

Such never cared to know whether or not any could be annoyed by an air so perfectly aromatic to themselves. Our young friends, with Mr. Marshly, Mrs. Dinsmore, and Carrie, were so fortunate as to procure seats in each other's vicinity, and forgot the trials of the way in the

enjoyment of social converse, and any thing pleasuarble that passed before them.

Kate had a happy faculty of extracting all the sweet that could possibly be gleaned from any thing, of whatever kind it might be. She was emphatically one of those mortals the poet must have had in mind when he said, —

> "Out of the self-same cup one nectar drinks;
> Another, draughts of gall."

She accustomed herself to expect imperfection in almost every thing relating to mortals; and, if everybody was not exactly suited to her taste, she contrived to endure cheerfully the trial of coming in contact with them, when it was necessary for her to do this. To her, then, a journey was never irksome. The ride from Albany to Rosefield need not be excepted. Still, it was with a feeling of delight she saw the spires of her native town.

Kate was sincerely sorry that Carrie was going so far beyond, for she really loved the child even upon this short acquaintance; but Hope's fairy fingers pointed to distant days, when they might again meet.

Mr. Marshly and Mary accompanied her in a carriage to her mother's door. There the tenderest greetings awaited her. Mr. Marshly went home with Mary, and then took lodgings at a hotel, manifesting little if any disposition to travel farther without company. He had informed the ladies of his intention of stopping during a few days in Rosefield ere Kate left them.

Kate did not ask him if he had special business at the place, for she had gathered as much from certain inuendoes that had been inadvertently perhaps given while on their way. What his business was she readily guessed,

and was interested to know how he succeeded. She had not long to wait, however.

The very next day Mary visited her. Kate saw in her countenance, when she first made her appearance, that a weighty subject occupied her mind. As soon as Mary found herself alone with her friend, she told her all that she had expected to hear.

"I did not think, until last evening," said the confiding girl, "that Mr. Marshly was going to ask me a question that is so difficult for me to answer."

"What makes it so difficult?" asked Kate.

"Why, you seem to know what question it is," said Mary.

"It's not strange that I should suspect what it is, particularly after observing Mr. Marshly's attentions to your ladyship."

"Perhaps not. But what shall I do? He is a slaveholder."

"What duty prompts, and inclination also, if it goes hand in hand with duty, — not otherwise."

"In this case inclination and duty lead one way," answered Mary.

"I could not be happy as the holder of slaves, — I am sure of that. I cannot consent to a union that would place me in such a situation; and yet I do like Mr. Marshly better than any other man I have ever been acquainted with. I told him all this, Kate. Was I not frankhearted?"

"Yes, dear Mary, and so you are always. But what did the gentleman say to this?"

"Oh! he said I had been under your influence, he made

sure; 'but,' said he, 'I am not displeased at this. I would be glad if I was differently situated, but I can't help myself at present.' I then told him that I regretted the present state of things in regard to ourselves, but that I could not consent to become responsible in the sense in which he already was. I was afraid of having too much power. He reasoned, or thought he did, upon the subject, and seemed hurt with me, because I could not be convinced that black was white, as I told him."

"But how did you conclude to settle this affair?"

"It is unsettled. He begged hard that I would reconsider the subject, and then, he said, he trusted I should decide in his favor."

"Well, Mary, you have done well so far. I suppose you have not as yet resolved to accept him, with his slaves, have you?"

"Have I? No, indeed! And, the more I reflect upon the subject, the more I shrink from assuming a responsibility such as I am assured our benevolent Father in heaven never intended any of his creatures should assume. Still, Kate, I repeat, I do like Mr. Marshly in all but his slaves. I wish it were so that I could say yes to him; and to you, my kind, indulgent friend, I am not ashamed to make this confession."

"I hope, Mary," remarked Kate, "that you may be made happy yet with him, and without the accompaniment of slavery."

"Do you suppose he could be prevailed upon to give them free papers, Kate?"

"It is not too much to hope. You remember, Mary, what once opened the prison doors."

"I do. Will you unite with me in using the same means then employed to free Mr. Marshly's bondmen?"

"With all my heart, Mary. I have been taught by experience to have faith in prayer. It is my habitual refuge in seasons of perplexity."

"It shall be my refuge now," said Mary. "'I will lift up my eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.'"

"Let us agree in asking our Father in heaven," said Kate, "to influence Mr. Marshly, by his spirit, to abandon the evil of slavery. It will not be a useless petition, if it merely benefits ourselves alone."

To this suggestion Mary's heart thankfully responded; and her spirit was relieved of its burden by committing all her dearest interests to the keeping of that Friend who sympathizes with, and lightens the sorrows of, all who love him. Mr. Marshly remained at Rosefield nearly a fortnight, waiting for Mary to consent to share his lot in life without conditions; but waited in vain. Her own heart was enlisted sometimes on his side, in this struggle of wrong with right; still she did not yield to the temptation presented in the guise of affection, but allowed him to depart for his home, assured that she could never be his while he owned a fellow-being.

Mr. Marshly was convinced, that, in Mary's case, love was sacrificed to duty. He valued her character more highly for adhering to what she believed was right, although he could not see eye to eye with her in this respect. During his homeward journey, his mind dwelt almost constantly upon this subject Sometimes, in a moment of irritation, while brooding over his disappointment,

he was tempted to brand Mary as a fanatic. Then his fancy would paint her as he last saw her, — lovely, though sadness shaded her expressive features, while she affectionately and mildly declared to him her unchanging decision.

"I cannot blame her," said he, mentally. "The powerful force of education has made her thus. My training has been different."

Then he pondered long upon the difference in the circumstances that had ever surrounded Mary from those by which his early impressions had been made.

"I wish," thought he, "that this slavery bugbear did not exist."

After his return home, his mind constantly wandered back to Rosefield. In imagination, he saw Mary, and seemed to hear her say again those words, that he was satisfied would not be recalled, though he knew they had been uttered with a feeling of pain. He did not for one moment doubt her affection. He knew, too, that she was not over fastidious; and he was constrained to believe that she was right. He did not wish to admit this fact, even to himself.

"If I am in the wrong in regard to this slavery question, I am not alone," said he to himself. "Yet this does not help me, in my present dilemma; besides, a thing may be popular, and still be wrong. Less than half a century since, dram-drinking was the order of the day in all parts of this country. It was as wrong then as now, yet the wrong was unheeded. When a protest was first entered against the practice, it was styled fanatical. Now, although many continue the habit, a multitude are opposed to it, in practice and principle. This multitude is

composed, too, of many of the best spirits in the land. It may be so in regard to slavery. I am not sure that it will not. I must think more upon this subject. It will do no hurt."

Now, for awhile, we leave Mr. Marshly engaged in cogitating the matters so interesting to him, and look in again upon the family at Rosefield.

CHAPTER X.

"Life's little stage is a small eminence,
Inch high the grove above, — that home of man,
Where dwells the multitude." *Young.*

The remainder of the summer was spent tranquilly, if not happily, at Mr. Felton's. Pleasure and duty were, for the most part, synonymous words with the members of that household. Kate most sincerely sympathized with her friend Mary in the trial through which she was passing; and never was she forgotton, when, drawing near her best Friend, she poured into his gracious ear the story of her own cares. Mary looked upward, and hope illumed her pathway with a chastened light.

The autumn came and went without bringing any thing worthy of particular notice to the little circle that claims our interest. Early in December they left, to spend a short season, during the most severe part of the winter, at the South.

A gentleman who belonged in Virginia, who was on his way thither, had been engaged by Mr. Felton to call at his mother's, and be the companion of their journey. Mr. Felton could not leave home, or did not wish to do so, because of the feeble health of his youngest daughter. He was fearful that her illness might increase during his absence. An urgent invitation was again sent to Mary Winthrop by the whole family on the plantation, but she hesitated in regard to accepting it.

Kate, although she greatly desired her society, would not urge her, because she understood the feelings by which she was governed.

"I really wish to go for some reasons," said Mary to Kate, before deciding what to do; "and, if I knew that my task of heart-discipline would not be harder at Groveton, I would accompany you."

"Why should it be?" asked Kate. "It would not be to me; but I cannot judge for another, not even my dearest friend."

"I am afraid of running into temptation; yet I fear that I should be, in parting from you. I will venture to undertake this journey."

Kate was gratified with this decision of her friend, and so was her mother. Susan was happy in the thought of again meeting Emma and Rosa, and, with the bright anticipations peculiar to youth, looked forward to the hour for their meeting. The gentleman, when he came for them, proved to be the veritable Mr. Platon with whom Julia Abbott had once made herself merry. Kate did not at first recognize him: his manners were less foppish than formerly, and his air so much more serious, that she thought he must have learned some wisdom by experience. He proved a very efficient escort for our little party, and never so much as attempted a flirtation during all the time he was attached to it.

After a peculiarly pleasant trip for the season when pleasant weather is the most delightful, the travellers once more reached Groveton. Happiness was the presiding genius at that social board again, as mother, children, and grandchildren gathered once more around it.

"Our circle is still unbroken," said Mr. Felton; "we are all here."

"Yes," replied his mother; "let us, for this blessing, be thankful. It cannot always be thus; there must come a change. For this we should be daily preparing."

"I trust you will live to gladden our hearts many years yet, my dear mother," said her son: "our circle may long be unbroken."

"One need not be old to die!" remarked Rosa, with a serious air and tone.

"Now do stop talking about death," said Emma; "it is not a fit subject for this joyous day; and, besides, I never like to have it introduced at any time."

"I don't feel as you do about it, Emma. I like to think and talk of death, — it is sometimes sweet," answered Rosa; "but I will not speak of it any more now, if it annoys you."

Kate regarded both nieces with an expression of tenderness. Rosa appeared almost angelic, as she gazed upon her, while she was speaking to Emma. Her complexion was well-nigh transparent in its whiteness, her eyes beamed with a lustre almost too bright for earth, while her cheeks glowed with a flush of excited feeling that made the expression of her countenance radiant with a beauty not its own.

"Is it possible," thought Kate, "that Rosa is the victim of an insidious disease, and her parents know it not?"

She sought an early opportunity to express her thoughts upon the subject to her brother. He thought there was no cause for alarm in particular; she had never been very strong. Some weeks previous to this he had been appre-

hensive of her coming down with a fever; but now he trusted these symptoms had passed away, and, under the care of good old Ruthy, she would soon be as strong and lively as ever. In this opinion he was sustained by the agreeable effect produced upon Rosa by the arrival of her friends. Her grandmother was very dear to her. She loved Mary Winthrop and Susan: but her Aunt Kate was loved by her with an ardor surpassing her affection for all others, except her parents; and they were not certain that even this exception could be made. The society of no other had charms for her like that of her aunt. She eagerly listened to each word that fell from her lips; and, even when she was silent, she loved to sit or recline upon the sofa beside her, with her own slender arm entwined around Kate's neck. Rosa felt that she was understood, appreciated, loved, cared-for in every sense, by this dear friend, that was necessary to render her friendship the choicest of earthly blessings. Other friends might be and were very dear; but no one could fill her place, and it was left void ever during her aunt's absence.

The weather was at this time extremely pleasant, just cool enough to be invigorating. The young people improved it by riding horseback. Every feeling of lassitude and physical depression was chased to the winds, by these genial breezes, from each of the party except Rosa. When returning from these excursions, she was often so weary as to be obliged to lie upon her couch during most of the day.

Sometimes she would excuse herself from going out, and spend the time during the absence of her friends in the retirement of her own room. Driving was resorted

to, for the sake of Rosa's company, by the young people. She enjoyed a drive exceedingly; but Kate saw that this mode of exercise also fatigued her too much. They shortened their drives. Mr. Felton thought that continued exercise, notwithstanding it wearied her, would, if persevered in, bring back the strength she had lost; but he was obliged to believe it was not so, but the contrary. Rosa was cheerful; a smile was ever adorning her features; and good Aunt Ruthy said there wasn't a happier being anywhere than her darling Rosa, — dearer than ever to her faithful, loving heart, now that she was ill.

"I can tell ye, deary," said she to Kate, not long after her arrival at Groveton, "there's a cloud 'pears like hanging over us. Death is coming here; I sees him 'proachin' slow, but he'll sartin be here 'fore spring. I's noticed Miss Rosa this long time; she's growd too good to stop here long. She allers was good, but 'pears like she be's a angel now. She thinks more 'bout heaven than she does of what's on this yer 'arth, I make sure. Don't you think so, Missee Kate?"

"Yes, Ruthy. Rosa has never been unamiable to me; but I see a great change in her. Her temper is sweet now at times; and, it seems to me, she is patiently waiting in confident expectation for her Saviour's mandate to go forth to meet him."

"He'll come 'fore long, 'pend on't," was Ruthy's answer.

Before the month of January was ended, Rosa became too weak to go down stairs. For a time her father carried her down to the family sitting-room in his arms; but this at length was more than she could bear, and she begged

to be allowed to remain in her own room. She was never left alone, except at short intervals, at her own request. Each one of the family deemed it a privilege to be with her. Her good old friend was unwilling to give up her right of head-nurse, even to Kate; but she was willing to share with others the pleasure of sitting by her dear one's bedside.

The conviction was now forced upon the mind of her father that Rosa was seriously ill. He had called in a physician a week before. He now asked the doctor to seek the best counsel in the country round, for he would spare neither trouble nor expense to benefit his daughter. Accordingly, the best physicians to be found were employed, and every means used that affection could prompt to arrest the progress of disease. Still, its march was onward, though silent its tread.

Mr. Felton spent hours with his daughter every day at short intervals. Sometimes, when she could bear it, he read to her, — often from the Bible, sometimes from the writings of her favorite authors. The Bible she preferred, she said, on account of its having been dictated in a sense by her best Friend. It was his letter to her. A portion of it were the very words her Saviour had spoken; "and, when I get to heaven," said she, "I shall remember how you read about the very Friend I shall then be with, and that will be delightful. Oh! I love to think of my heavenly home; and I want you and mamma, and all my friends, to be with me there."

"Rosa, dear," asked Mr. Felton, "don't you love to be here?"

"I do, father. I dearly love you all, and very dearly

too; but you know, that, while I do this, I can love another even better. You believe I love you, dear father, don't you?" asked she, regarding him at the moment with a look of affection he could never forget.

"I do, my dear, dear daughter. I cannot doubt your love for me, or any of us."

"It is because I love you all so well that I wish you to be with me through all eternity. I am not quite certain that all of my friends are sure of going to heaven if they should die; and some are careless about it, I am afraid. I love to pray for such."

Seeing that her father betrayed emotion he sought in vain to conceal, she said to him, —

"I do not wish to give you pain, my dear, kind father, and I am sorry if I have said any thing to distress you. I hope you will forgive me."

Her father assured her that it was the thought of parting with her, and that alone, that was painful.

"You have said nothing, my child, to grieve me." He then arose; and, after kissing her affectionately, left the chamber.

The days came and went, all too swiftly to those who dreaded the arrival of the hour in which a dear object was to leave them for ever. The strength of Rosa failed gradually; but her spirit sustained her sinking frame, or rather the Spirit of that Saviour on whom she leaned for support. Friends looked upon her, and were constrained to exclaim, in the fullness of their hearts, "See what God hath wrought!"

Ruthy declared that the religion that her dear young Missee had was the kind she liked best to see. She

wasn't "agwine to say that them ar gloomy kind er Christians had no religion at all," but she sometimes thought it was a kind that did hurt to other folks; "it makes um sort er feel as though religin was stiff an' sorryful like. They's didn't car ter have it unless they's 'bleeged to git whar they'd be happy. But this ere sort Miss Rosa's got is what's pleasant to have any whar," said the unsophisticated woman. "I heered Miss Emma say, the other day, that she wished she was Rosa."

"All may be like her," said Kate. "God's promises are made to every one."

Mr. Marshly made the Feltons a visit during the winter. Towards Mary he was kind and respectful, but never once asked her to revoke her decision. He seemed unusually thoughtful, and often spent a few moments in the room with Rosa. It seemed as though he could never weary in gazing upon her sweet countenance. One day, as he sat with Mr. Felton by her bedside, conversing with them both, Rosa said there was one subject upon which she thought a great deal, and she wished to know if God created the slaves in their present condition.

"No," replied her father, "he did not."

"Then how came they to be in subjection to white men, as they are here?"

"This state of things was brought about by incidental causes," remarked Mr. Marshly; observing that Rosa's father hesitated, as if he cared not to reply directly.

"What were those incidental causes?" inquired Rosa; "they must have been very mysterious."

"Why?" asked Mr. Marshly.

"Because the effect is so dark."

"Perhaps you have heard of the African slave-trade?" said the gentleman, by way of rejoinder.

"I have heard the term. What does it mean?"

"Why, only that colored people were brought to this country in vessels, and sold to the people here for servants."

"How did those who brought them come to have them? Were they prisoners of war?"

"No: they brought them from their homes in Africa," answered Mr. Felton.

"Without their consent?" interrogated Rosa.

"Yes," replied he; "I am sorry to be obliged to say this is true."

"Oh, how very, very wicked this was! Don't you think so, father? and don't you too, Mr. Marshly?"

"I do," quickly responded Mr. Felton. "And, since I have reflected more upon this subject," said Mr. Marshly, "I am satisfied it is not right."

Here the conversation was interrupted, and no more was said at that time upon the topic under discussion. A few more days had passed, during which Rosa's strength diminished rapidly. Her father was again by her bedside, anxiously watching the almost celestial light that gleamed through the countenance of this beloved one, whose stay on earth seemed short, when, regarding him with a smile of affection, she said, —

"I am glad you are with me now. I have a request to make of you, while I have strength to speak."

"Let me know what you would ask," said her father, in loving accents. "I don't think I shall reject your petition."

"I do not believe you will either, my dear good father; although I shall ask a great deal. I have been thinking," continued she, "of our conversation the other day, about the way in which we got the slaves. It seems to me that our people were thieves who brought them from Africa."

"That is a harsh term, Rosa."

"Well, were they *honest* in doing it?"

"No, they were not."

"Then they were *dis*honest; and that is taking what does not belong to one. Is not that stealing?"

"Perhaps so," admitted her father.

"Isn't the partaker called as bad as the thief, father, in other cases?"

"Yes, that maxim is generally allowed, the world over."

"Then those who bought these stolen men and women did very wrong. They were dishonest, too, were they not?"

"It seems hard to say this; and yet, if we analyse their acts, it amounts to just this, and nothing better," said Mr. Felton, thoughtfully.

"Now," asked Rosa, "how much better is it in us to keep on doing as those did who first bought the slaves? If it was dishonest to enslave them at first, it is no better to do so now, as I can see. I do so wish the government would be at the expense of abolishing slavery! The nation would be a happier one, wouldn't it, father?"

"I think so, Rosa. But what is your request? Is it that I shall carry such a petition to Congress, if I go next year?"

"I had not thought of that; though I don't see why

it could do the least hurt. I am only going to ask you to give dear old Ruthy and Lucy free papers, so that they may not be slaves, and sold, if you should die, or any thing else unfortunate take place."

"You have taken me by surprise, Rosa. Perhaps, if they had free papers, they would make their way to the free states, and then you would lose your good nurse."

"I don't believe that they would think of doing so, or wish to, either; because she is held here by a bond stronger than that of slavery."

Mr. Felton knew what this was, but yet asked Rosa what other bond held Ruthy.

"That of affection. I know she would never leave any of our family if she could help it. She loves us all very dearly, I know."

"Rosa, did your Aunt Kate suggest this idea to you? Does she wish me to free Ruthy?"

"Father, I do not know. She did not suggest the ideas I have in regard to this subject I have brought before you. Still, I dare say she would be glad if Ruthy and all the rest of the people were free. We have not spoken directly to each other about these things during this winter. I will tell you," — and she proceeded with much earnestness in her manner, — "it is because I am so near another world, father, that I see things differently from what I used to. Every thing is earnest and real now to me. Things I once thought little seem of consequence now; while some I thought most of, once, seem not worth a thought. I used to feel as if it was enough for us to treat every one kindly. Now, I see we owe more to each of our fellow-beings; because we are all children of one

Father, and for his sake we must try to do good to all over whom we may exert any influence. I see every thing so clearly now, father, that I wonder I have been so dull all my life long. But you will give Ruthy free papers, won't you, father dear? Promise now; for I am getting too tired to say much more."

"Yes, my dear daughter, I will. I fear I have allowed you to talk too much already. So now rest content with the assurance I give that Ruthy shall be her own mistress. Her daughter, too, shall have free papers."

Mr. Felton arose to go down stairs. He went as far as the door, and then returned to Rosa's bedside. He stood for a few minutes in a thoughtful attitude, and then said, —

"Rosa."

She opened her eyes, and looked up into his face with a languid smile.

"Don't say any thing to influence Ruthy to stay here after she is free. Let her do just as she chooses."

"I will promise not to say any thing to her about it. I am very sure she will choose to stay, unless you wish her to leave."

"She has not been tried, my dear. People's characters cannot be developed without trial. Sometimes we act very differently from what we flattered ourselves we should do before we were tried."

"I know it is so, father. Still, I have great confidence in Ruthy's piety."

"So have I, Rosa. But you must not say any more to-day. I will now leave you with Ruthy, who will keep you quiet."

As he said this, he cast a significant glance at the nurse, who at that moment entered the room.

"The poor lamb orter go ter sleep right away. She's tired, poor thing!"

And the good soul approached the bed with gentle tread, smoothed the clothes, turned Rosa's pillow, and then, after giving her some refreshments, sat down where she could see her, and soothed her into a state of repose by humming a sweet, melodious tune that her patient very much loved.

Mr. Felton thought long and deeply upon what Rosa had said to him. He felt that she was in the right, and was glad he had pledged himself to free her nurse. In his inmost soul he wished to do the same by all his people.

Mr. Marshly tarried in the neighborhood of the plantation. Spell-bound, as it seemed, he lingered near the only one, as he now felt, whose society would make him truly happy. He gave Kate full credit, now, for good judgment in thinking she was not exactly suited to his tastes, and that she should fail in making his home what he desired. He admired her, he respected her; and he had once mistaken for love this admiration and respect. Now he was undeceived. His regard for Kate was undiminished, his respect was unabated. But when he first saw Mary Winthrop, and conversed with her, he found that he had not before known a feeling similar to that she inspired in his breast. The more he saw her, the more grateful did he feel to Kate for so resolutely denying him the favor he had asked.

To be denied by Mary Winthrop was indeed a trial. It was true, her rejection of him was only conditional.

He was satisfied that she regarded him with an affection of which any man would be proud, and had thought of a plan which he hoped Mary would approve, but waited for a fit opportunity to lay it before her. His native refinement and delicacy forbade him to intrude his own affairs now upon one whose sympathies were called forth for other friends, who were constantly expecting the arrival of death's angel, that ever unwelcome messenger, to bear from their circle the most endeared of its members. He had not long to wait, however; for, in a few days, Rosa's happy spirit passed from her loved home of affection and tenderness on earth to a fairer, sweeter, and more peaceful home above. She exchanged the fond caresses of doting friends there for the love, purity, and unalloyed bliss of that circle who continually cry, "Worthy the Lamb."

Just before her departure, she entreated her mother and all her friends to part with her with a cheerful spirit.

"I do not love to think," said she, "that my removal will throw a gloom over the household. I want you to think of me with pleasure. I shall only be gone to a happy mansion, where I shall expect you all to come after me. You must come; for there is nothing to prevent you, if you choose."

Her remains were deposited in a beautiful casket. Her grave-dress was peculiarly neat: it was made of white muslin, the neck and sleeves trimmed with a superb edging of lace. A handsome bow of wide white satin ribbon appeared to confine the neck of the dress, while similar bows adorned her alabaster-like arms. Her hair was tastefully arranged, and her head was encircled with a

wreath of white flowers, intermingled with green leaves. Choicest flowers were strewn over her whole figure, as it lay uncovered by the lid of the casket; while her right hand held a beautiful bunch of white roses and buds. None gazed upon her, as she lay awaiting her removal to her last resting-place, but to admire. All who knew her during the last year of her life felt that all this outward loveliness was made more attractive by being emblematical of inward sweetness. Those fading flowers were more lovely to the view, because they were suggestive of those celestial bowers now the home of the departed, —

"Where fairer flowers than Eden's bloom,"

and where, too, the lightest shade of sin shall never annoy the inhabitants.

A large circle of sympathizing friends attended the funeral of Rosa. Julia Abbott arrived just in time to witness her departure from earth, but tarried some little time after she was buried. Mr. Platon also came; but the ludicrous affair concerning himself and Julia was scarcely thought of, — if at all, not in a manner to give pain. He had learned wisdom by experience truly, as Julia affirmed, and was no longer in danger of believing that every woman who treated him with kind, easy politeness, was in love with him.

The whole household seemed to reverence the wish expressed by the dear one who had gone, that gloom should not enshroud the dwelling on account of her removal. They thought of her, "not as lost, but gone before," and were comforted. They confidently expected that she had gone to a blissful home, and this seemed to

create a link to unite them to that happy world. Few tears were shed; but the different members of the family never wearied of talking of her that was gone.

Good old Ruthy mourned longer and louder than any one else; for, as she said, she must cry, — the tears would come, when she thought that she should never do any thing more for the "dear lamb!" as she loved to call Rosa. She strove to dry her tears, however, and feel composed, if not cheerful; and she soon succeeded, insomuch that she could speak of her loved young lady, without a painful outburst of sorrow. It was evident, that, to all the near friends, the death of Rosa was a sanctified affliction. Their sorrow was not only chastened, but they were led to regard earth's blessings as more transitory, and heavenly joys as more real and substantial. The language of this event to Julia Abbott was not unheeded. She had heard the dying words of one younger than herself, to whom life promised much that was desirable; and was assured, by what she had listened to, that there was something more to be desired than earthly good, — a brighter world, that is more true, more desirable, than this.

Piety had hitherto been a too serious subject to interest Julia. She had deemed it staid and sober. It is true, she realized a difference between the Felton family and some other religious families she had visited; but, until now, she had not felt that the difference was caused by the character of their religion. The prayers of Mr. Felton at the family altar were, Julia thought, rather more tolerable than the stereotyped petitions and meal-grace of her father; because Mr. Felton seemed to think more of what he was saying than the others. Now she saw and felt

that it was heart-piety, not formal religion, that brought peace; and the former, she now determined, should be hers.

CHAPTER XI.

"Nothing in human nature is so godlike as the disposition to do good to our fellow-creatures." — RICHARDSON.

IN a few days after the occurrence of the events mentioned in the preceding chapter, Mr. Marshly informed Mary that he contemplated offering freedom to all his slaves, and allowing them, if they chose, to work for him still.

"Can you do so," asked she, "and live at your old home in Georgia, as you have done?"

"No: I think of removing to the West; and, if my people are willing to go, they may, and be free."

Mary's heart beat at this announcement almost audibly; she was quite overcome. The tears, that would not be driven back, ran down her cheeks. She was half ashamed of herself, yet could not conceal her emotion. Mr. Marshly saw it, but did not understand why she should be so much affected. He thought her tears were not those of sorrow, and he thought rightly. They were offered at the shrine of gratitude and joy. Were her humble, unworthy prayers, and those of her friend, that had gone up unitedly with her own, about to be answered? She had hoped they would be regarded, yet she hardly believed an answer like that she received would come so soon.

It was some minutes before she became sufficiently composed to converse. During this interval, Mr. Marshly looked upon her with mingled feelings. Her pertur-

bation plainly said, "I love you as well as ever, my friend." This assurance gave him pleasure: but he was not sure that she approved his scheme of going westward to seek a home; and this doubt was painful. As soon as she could trust her voice to speak, Mary told him she hoped he would succeed in the plan he proposed, for she thought it an excellent one.

"But," asked she, "if some of your people choose to go to Canada, what will you say to that?"

"I will say, 'Go, and God speed you on your journey!' There may be, there probably are, some who have relatives that have escaped from the slave states. These will naturally wish to rejoin their friends, and I cannot object to their doing so; but the largest number of my servants, I am satisfied, will be proud to follow me to any part of the country where they can be freemen."

"Then you will not hold property in human beings again, — will you, Mr. Marshly?" interrogated Mary, in the simplicity of her noble heart.

"Heaven forbid, that, having once put my hand to this unpopular plough, I should turn back!"

"I rejoice," answered Mary, "that want of popularity does not cause you to shrink from the undertaking you propose."

"All my plans will be cheerfully executed, if I may but be cheered by your approving smiles, Mary."

"You will certainly have my approbation in pursuing the course you have mentioned."

"Will you consent to be my companion, if I immigrate to the far West, and if I do not have slaves to toil for me?"

"Yes, gladly," frankly responded Mary.

Mr. Marshly thanked her with both look and word.

Mary's tears found vent again, when she related this conversation to Kate. The eyes of her friend were not tearless while she listened.

"Another encouragement to faith in prayer," responded she. "How strange that we do not oftener go to God to make particular requests! We ask for general favors, and insult the majesty of Heaven by practically saying that God does not deign to feel an interest in our particular affairs."

"I shall believe practically now, I hope, that prayer is the key that unlocks the treasury of God's storehouse," replied Mary.

"Yes," said Kate, smiling, "and a pleasant key to use, if we only keep it bright."

"I hope to be enabled to keep this key from growing rusty hereafter," was Mary's rejoinder.

That same evening, while at the tea-table, Mr. Marshly stated his plans to all there assembled. Among the company were Mr. Easyside and Mr. Platon. The latter found it very pleasant and convenient to drop in and spend a short season with the family at the plantation, every now and then.

On hearing Mr. Marshly express the determination he had made, both these gentlemen stared in amazement. Mr. Felton, however, looked no surprise, — he felt none.

"Is not this scheme of yours something rather precipitate?" asked Mr. Easyside.

"Not very, sir," replied the other. "I have been revolving this project in my mind for some months; yet I may say that my decision was hastened by hearing words

that fell from the lips of one whose seat at this table is now vacant."

For more than one minute, silence reigned throughout the circle. Memory was busy. A lovely being was again present. Mr. Felton broke the silence, ere it became painful, by cheerfully remarking that he highly approved of Mr. Marshly's plans; and he hoped he would be prospered in this new start in life.

"If he is satisfied, I ought not to complain," said Mr. Easyside. "Still," he continued, "it would not do for every southerner to move off with his people. The South would be depopulated at that rate."

"It would not be necessary, in order to have our people free, if the Golden Rule was not forgotten by our lawmakers. It is greatly to be hoped that the present state of things will not always exist."

"Are you going over on the side of abolitionists, Mr. Felton?" asked Mr. Platon.

"If you mean to ask if I am turned denouncer, I answer no. But if you wish to know if I think our system of slavery is at variance with the Golden Rule, which all are bound to observe, I answer yes. Emphatically, too, would I pronounce the word."

"My son has recently been helping forward the work of emancipation among his own people," said the senior Mrs. Felton.

"Indeed!" answered the reverend gentleman. "Have any of your servants left the place?"

"Not one of them. And, furthermore, there is no danger of our being deserted by any of them," Mr. Felton replied. "Our darling Rosa requested me to give free papers

to her nurse, and her nurse's daughter Lucy, whose health is very delicate. I did it; and my dear child had the satisfaction, ere she left us, of knowing that she had conferred a great amount of happiness upon this faithful, though humble, friend."

"A friend in a servant! What an idea!" said Mr. Platon.

"Servants are among the best of friends," remarked Mr. Felton. "If you reflect more upon the subject, my friend, I presume you will come to the same conclusion."

"How is Ruthy made happy by her freedom, if she still remains in your service?" asked Mr. Easyside.

"I will answer your question in Ruthy's own words. When I showed her the free papers, and told her that herself and Lucy were slaves no longer, she was very much surprised, — so much so that she did not speak, at first; but, after a moment, she asked if she could not live here, and do as she had done. I told her she could do just as she pleased in regard to it. 'Then,' said she, 'I chooses to stay. Oh! it'll be mighty comfortable to have that 'ar feelin' gone that I'se had so long. I'll be as light as a feather now. I shan't be afeared, somehow, dat somethin' 'll happen, and we'd have ter be sold agin. But now, bress de Lord! I'se easy 'bout dat 'ar; an' the burden I'se carried so long has fell off.' When I heard these honest expressions of the good old soul, I felt the evil of our system as I never did before. Would I could make all my people free! and certainly would, if the laws of my state would allow it. I feel the force of truths uttered by Rosa, upon her deathbed, more forcibly every day."

"I have thought much," said Mr. Marshly, "of her idea in regard to the dishonesty of our government and people in allowing slavery. She was correct in affirming that the sin of those who first stole the Africans, and brought them from their own homes, is winked at by us who have received these stolen fellow-creatures, and appropriated their services. I, for one, will be free from this inherited evil."

"I rejoice to know that this is your decision, Mr. Marshly," said Kate. "I am beginning to feel proud of this act in my friend already."

The gentleman smiled, and bowed his thanks. He did not prolong his stay at Groveton after this, but hastened his return homeward. His feelings were far more enviable now than they were when he was making the journey *to* Groveton; and, upon his arrival, he greeted his people with a countenance so expressive of pleasure that they were led to think something very pleasant had befallen him during his absence. This they whispered among themselves, and taxed their ingenuity to guess the cause. Mr. Marshly's house was nominally superintended by a maiden aunt of forty, whose name was Dresden, though she was generally called Aunt Pattie by her nephew, and Missus Pattie by the slaves. This lady was sociable, good-natured, and kind, spite of the stigma so commonly thrown upon all single ladies of her age, of crossness and precision.

She delighted to see everybody and every thing as easy and comfortable as circumstances would possibly allow them to be; and, if the truth must be told, it was this passion for comfort that had induced her to refuse

more than one eligible offer of marriage. Her heart had never been, in reality, taken captive by any one; and, having seen much of the darkest side of matrimonial life, she had thus far shrunk from risking her happiness by embarking upon its sea. She did not undervalue the holy institution of marriage, but honored it; yet believed, with Dr. Watts, —

> "Two kindred souls alone must meet;
> 'Tis friendship makes the bondage sweet,
> And feeds their mutual loves."

Nothing could afford this kind aunt more pleasure than the news communicated to her by her nephew soon after his return to the plantation. She had long wished he might bring to his home a good wife; so now, when informed that her wish would probably, at some future time, be gratified, she was really delighted. But, when informed that they were to move from their present home, and seek another in the back-woods, as she styled the far distant West, her countenance lost its bright expression for a little while.

"Charles, what a foolish notion! what put it into your head, I wonder!" said the good woman, with a troubled air.

"Foolish! Why, my dear Aunt Pattie, I thought you, of all others, would be willing to have our people free," was Mr. Marshly's rejoinder.

"And so I would, if you but just give them free papers, and stay here, — I should like that."

"I cannot do that, auntie: our laws would play the mischief with me if I should."

"I don't know as I ought to speak against the laws of

our State or country, but I cannot but think they might be better. The Bible bids us reverence those that are in authority; and I suppose it does not become a woman like me to meddle with politics, though I wish things were different."

"A woman like my Aunt Pattie has a right to do all she can to improve the politics of her country, if she departs not from the sphere in which Providence has placed her," was the gentle reply of her nephew.

"Pray tell me what I can do, — I, who don't believe in women going before the public to speak; for I'm sure I don't know."

"You can express your opinions fearlessly on the side of truth, and exert your influence in many quiet, unobtrusive ways, in behalf of right; and, even if you are in too feeble a state of health to admit of your mingling in society, you can exert an influence by prayer. One need not be a senator, in order to labor for their country's good."

"I do believe, Charles, that you are in the right; but you have not always thought upon this subject as you now do," answered Aunt Pattie.

"I regret," replied Mr. Marshly, "to be obliged to confess that I have, until recently, advocated the cause of oppression; for our system of slavery cannot be truthfully termed any thing better. I inherited slaves as my rightful patrimony, without troubling myself to inquire how my forefathers came to possess them. I have been led to reflect, and reflection has convinced me that man cannot sinlessly hold his fellow-creature as property."

"I am right glad you feel so upon this subject,

Charles," said his aunt: "but I don't want you to express these northern sentiments at home here, because it will create opposition and get up a commotion; and, if there's any thing I dislike, it is an unpleasant bluster. I had rather bear wrong than make a fuss, any time."

"You have a right to do this all the days of your life, as far as only yourself is concerned; but you have no right to impose wrong, or see it imposed upon your fellow-beings, and be silent."

"Well," responded Aunt Pattie, "I wish the world was all just right, and we could have things peaceful and comfortable; but, tell me, won't it be a horrible undertaking to break up here, and tote all the people off to the forests or prairies, even if they are willing to go?"

"It will be as hard to think about doing this as to accomplish it; but I must hasten to do my duty towards the people."

He did so, and astonished the different members of his household by declaring his intention of giving to each servant the privilege of choosing either of remaining with him, or seeking another home. He bade them think long upon the subject ere they decided, as he chose to have them influenced by their own free-will alone in deciding. He prepared the papers. They were legally executed, and ready to be delivered, before he was willing to know the manner in which his servants had decided.

On one of those beautiful days when all without the house invited its inmates abroad, to enjoy the mildly invigorating effect of the weather, Mr. Marshly, in company with his good-natured aunt, seated himself upon the veranda in front of his dwelling, and summoned all his

servants to meet him there. In the shortest possible time, they all presented themselves. Such an assemblage of men, women, and children could not be regarded with aught like indifference by a thinking mortal. Most of them were tidily, if not neatly dressed: some displayed much taste in the arrangement of their turbaned kerchiefs, and other portions of their dress; but it was the expression of their intelligent countenances that gave the most interest to their appearance.

"We'se come ter see what massa wants on us," said the foremost of the throng.

"Well, then," said Mr. Marshly, "I wish you to tell me what you are going to do, after I have given you these free papers."

"All on us?" asked one, — a tall, athletic man, with a complexion so very dark, that one felt, at first sight, that his blood was pure African.

"Yes, all of you," replied Mr. Marshly; "each of you must speak for him or her self. So tell me, Jack, what you intend to do."

"I'se agoing for to work for ye, massa, 's long as yer wants I to."

"Will you be willing to go to the West with me, Jack?"

"La's bress my heart, massa! 'pears like I'se willin' to go with yer ony whar ye 's, — that gude to me yer is!"

The same sentiment was expressed by most of the group. A few there were who had relatives in Canada, who were escaped fugitive slaves. These were persons whose blood was Anglo-Saxon, with a slight taint of the African, enough to mollify their courage. These expressed the most sincere affection for their master and

"missus," as they called Miss Dresden. One had an aged mother in Canada; another, a wife, who had escaped from a neighboring plantation. One more had a child she would like to meet again.

"Then go to your friends," said Mr. Marshly: "I will help you on your way, and wish you, too, a prosperous journey."

Tears of heartfelt gratitude coursed each other in swift succession down the cheeks of most of the party. Those who were to leave crowded around Mr. Marshly to listen to his assurances of kind regard for their highest good.

"Go," he said to them, "and do the best you can for yourselves and your friends. We part friends now; and, if you will always try to do right, I shall ever be ready to help and encourage you."

It was settled, ere the assemblage dispersed, that those who wished to go to Canada should start on their way thither as soon as they could get ready; while those who were to accompany Mr. Marshly to the West should remain upon the plantation, until he had selected a suitable place to locate himself in that country. Aunt Pattie declared her willingness to "tote," as she expressed herself, anywhere with Charles, if he only took unto himself a comfortable sort of a wife. She liked him, and hated to leave his home; but she must and would be comfortable, let what would come. Mr. Marshly started on his western tour early in the spring of that same year, leaving his aunt happily employed in guiding the helm of affairs at home.

We will leave him pleasantly engaged amid the beauties of this "great garden of nature," and travel back again to the household at the Groveton plantation.

CHAPTER XII.

"There is a tear that's ever bright,
Though flowing from a bosom rude;
Yielding ineffable delight,—
The sparkling tear of gratitude."—*Anon.*

VERY early in April, the family at Groveton felt it needful again to separate. Mrs. Felton's health did not demand a longer stay, and she was desirous to find herself once more in the midst of her home duties. The feelings of the friends at this parting were somewhat unlike those they had experienced formerly on similar occasions. There was less of confident expectation mingled with the hope of again meeting. A chastened but not a sad feeling pervaded each bosom; for one was missing now whose fragile form and lovely face had at other times added a charm to the little circle of loving hearts that clustered on the veranda to bid their departing friends adieu.

Another journey, replete with mercies, was added to the long catalogue of blessings already received from a kind Heavenly Father. Again the Feltons found their home the scene of quietness and order, with good old Maggie, garrulous and thankful as heretofore, to welcome again the dear family to their own loved dwelling.

Susan, as Maggie said, had grown nearly as tall as Kate. She was indeed a beautiful girl, and a great comfort to her friends. Her presence was welcomed wherever she went. She did not appear to forget the dark slough

from which she had by kindness been rescued, though not the least stain of its mire remained to remind others of her former situation.

Mary Winthrop felt quite as much at home, at Mrs. Felton's, as she did at her guardian's. After her return home, she looked anxiously every day for a letter from Mr. Marshly. She did not wait long ere the pleasure-giving missive arrived, and informed her that he was greatly enjoying his journey, admiring the country, and feeling grateful that he had been brought to do as he would like to be done by.

"I never was happier," said he, "than at this moment, for I never had so much motive before to prompt me to exertion. I shall write often, and keep you apprised in respect to my whereabouts and proceedings. There are many so inviting portions of country in which one might locate, that it is not an easy matter to select a spot for a home. One need not be fastidious here. I don't intend to be away from you longer than is absolutely necessary. Would you were now where I could consult your judgment and taste daily!"

"Almost a flatterer, Kate!—is he not?" said Mary, after having read this paragraph from the letter.

"I do not think so, Mary," was the reply of her friend. "He has spoken out of the abundance of his heart, and very truthfully too, I believe. He is too high-minded to flatter. I doubt not but his journeying through forests and flowers would be more delightful with you near him."

"Kate, you will visit the West with me some time,—won't you?" interrogated Mary.

"If practicable, I shall. I shall anticipate such a journey with delight," was the pleasant rejoinder.

Just then Maggie came into the room, and informed Kate that an outlandish sort of a man was in the kitchen, and wanted to see her.

"It isn't anybody that's ever been here afore," said Maggie; "I'm sure of that."

"Never mind that, Maggie: I am always willing to see all that call; tell him I will be there in a minute."

Kate hastened to put away some papers with which she had been busy, until interrupted by Mary, and then went to see the person who had called upon her, asking her friend to go to her mother's room during her absence. As soon as Kate entered the kitchen, and glanced at the weather-beaten stranger who was expecting her, he arose, and said, approaching her, —

"Plase your ladyship, is this the lady who took care of little Dora Smith, after her own mother felt so very ill, and died?" asked he.

"I am that person," answered Kate. "Did you know Mrs. Smith and her children?"

"And, sure, it's meself who ought to know them," said the man. "It's meself who ought to have stayed by and took care of the poor things; but I didn't, you see. I went off and left 'em to shift for themselves, like an ugly dog as I was thin; and it's gude enough for me now to come back an' not find 'em. But, ye see, where me old woman used to live, they told that you knew all about them, an' so I've taken the liberty to come to ask yer ladyship to tell me what I want to know."

"Are you Dora's father?" inquired Kate.

"I am, indade. Did they all die, the baby-boy an' all?" asked he.

"Yes, Mr. Smith. Your wife died first. The babe did not live long, — not but a very few days after her death; but Dora lived about a year and a half. I saw them all die, and I trust they are all at rest."

The tears coursed down the sunburnt cheeks of the lonely man.

"That's more'n I desarve to know 'bout 'em; but I want to thank your ladyship for your kindness. I've been told how ye found me little gal in the street, hungry and cold, and she went home with you to her mother; and I've heered, too, how much ye did for my poor woman, when I was a wretch, and thinking nothing about her; and thin how ye took Dora to your nice rich home, and treated her like a gintleman's child till she died. And now I must thank you for all this. I want yer ladyship to forgive me, and give me a kind word, as yer did the others, if yer happens to see me sometimes. Will yer ladyship do this?"

"Certainly I will," answered Kate. "I have felt interested in your welfare, even before I saw you. I do *now*, very much; and I must tell you that your little Dora remembered you, when she was dying, and wished me to tell you, if ever I should see you, that she wished you to become a Christian. She prayed that you might love her Saviour."

On hearing this, the strong man almost sobbed. He was greatly overcome, and some time elapsed ere he could command his voice to speak. When he did so, he said, —

"The little darlint! She was gude to think about her bad father so. I shouldn't er wondered if she had hated me. I was cross, and swore at her, when I used to get drunk. It was a bad husband and father that I was, in

them days, yer ladyship. The Lord has, I hope, had marcy on me, and made me a better man."

"Then our dear little Dora's prayers were answered," said Kate, "and I have lived to know it."

"Ye see, yer ladyship," said Mr. Smith, without seeming to notice what she had last said, "I was so troublesome, drinking and swearing, and doing all sorts of bad things, that the officer was sint after me, and I jist cleared the coast; for I'd ben to prison more'n once, and I didn't like no such board. So, thinks I to meself, ye may sarch and sarch, but ye shan't find me, Mr. Stars. Then, after I'd got away, for the life of me I couldn't get back. It was hard to git any work to do, 'cause I was such a poor fellow. I did work a day, once in a while; but I loved rum ye see, me lady, and I felt as if I must have a drop; so I'd jist git it, an' drink, an' forgit all about me family and everything. Oh! I wish good folks would make laws so that such poor critters as I was thin couldn't git rum when they wanted it! I wish I couldn't ha' got it thin. But, as I was sayin', I could drink, and so I did; till, one day, a man on the wharf where I was standing axed me if I knowed anybody that would like to ship. I didn't know what he meant at first, me lady, ye see; but he telled me that a vessel, all ready to sail, had to leave one man, because he was sick and couldn't work, an' they wanted somebody else to go right off. 'Well,' thinks I, yer see, me lady, 'Pat Smith can work.' I was sober then, and hungry, too, me lady, yer see; so I jist tells him I wanted some work, an' I'd go if they plased. So they hurried me at a great rate to ship and git ready; an' in two hours' time, me lady, I was off on the water, without hardly thinkin' 'bout

what I was doing. But ye see, me lady, it was a good thing for Pat Smith. There warnt the least bit of licker on board, except in the medicine chest, so I couldn't git drunk; an' thin the cap'en, me lady, ye see, wouldn't let a word like swearing be heard on his vessel. This was hard to me at first; but now I thank the Lord it was so. There was one youngster among the crew, me lady, who was always pleasant and kind to me and all the men. He was a good hand among the rigging, always did duty, and was so peaceable-like that we all liked him. I used to see him reading, every little while, in a book he kept very choice-like; and sometimes the tears was in his eyes, when he talked about his mother. And so I laughed at him, an' called him baby; but he didn't seem to care. Ye see, I'm sorry for what I did to him now, me lady; but I didn't know what I was doing thin, so I went on. An' I don't know what I'd a come to, me lady, but ye see I was taken sick, and I grew that bad that I expected to die. Then I was scared, for I hadn't ben to a priest for a long time to confess, and get absolution; and all my sins was on me so heavy, I was almost crazy to think I must die so. The cap'en was good to me, and the men did all they could for me. This youngster I'm telling ye about, me lady, knew better than all the rest what to do; an' though I'd laughed at him so much, and ben cross to him besides, he did every thing he could for me comfort, me lady. I didn't see how he could be so gude to me, when I'd ben ugly to him; an' ye see, me lady, I told him so one day, when he was rubbin' me legs an' feet, when the fever was hard on me, and they ached dreadfully. Well, don't you think! he looked at me as pleasant as could be, and

said he didn't mind any thing I had done to him, — he wanted to do me gude. I never was so 'shamed in my life, me lady. I knew he wasn't like most folks, an' I knew he was a heretic; but I see, me lady, that he had somethin' I did not know nothin' 'bout. So says I, 'Sam, I donno what I'll come to, if I die now. I havn't been to the praist to confess this many a day; an' now I can't git absolution nor go to confession, here on the big ocean, and I'll be cussed an' lost for ever, ye see.' 'No,' says he, 'I hope not, Patrick; for you have Jesus, our great High Priest, near by, an' you can go to him.' 'Not such a bad man as I've ben,' says I, 'without a praist to speak for me.' 'Jesus says to you, in his word, to come, no matter how bad you are, — without money, you may go and confess your sins. He has promised to hear you.' 'Sam,' says I, 'are you sure that is in the right Bible?' 'Yes,' says he, 'and I have learned that it is true by having felt it. I have gone to your and my Saviour, and told him I was very wicked, and couldn't make myself any better; and he has heard me, and I feel that he has forgiven all my sins.'

"'What makes you feel so?' says I. 'Did he spake to ye ever?' 'Yes,' says he, 'in the Bible; an' I believed him.' 'An' what is it he says?' says I.

"Then Sam took that book I'd seen him reading afore, an' read these words, 'Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.' 'Read that again,' says I. Then he read it three or four times. 'An',' said he, 'this he says to you an' me, Patrick, — is it good?' I was that ill thin, me lady, that I couldn't keep still, an' kept a lookin' at all the bad I've done; an' there wasn't nothin'

good in me life I could look at, — so I thought I must die. 'Then,' says Sam, 'try, Pat, to keep still a bit, an' pray to Jesus.' 'Then,' says I, 'I can't, for I never larnt to pray; besides, I'm that wicked, I darsen't.' 'You need not try hard to learn,' says he; and thin he kneeled down by the side of me bed, an' prayed such a prayer, me lady, that I had to keep still to hear it. It went right to me heart, me lady. I knew jist what the words meant. 'Thin,' says I, 'if that be praying, Sam, and yer sure, I'll try and be after praying meself.' 'Do,' says he; 'an' remember, that, if you raaly want God, our Saviour, to help you, he will. If you want a heart to love him, an' ask him for it for Jesus' sake, he will give it to you.'

"After that, me lady, I prayed. It was not hard, as I thought afore that; but 'twas that aisy, me lady, that a little child could 'er done it."

"Yes, my friend," replied Kate, "your own dear little Dora did do it, and prayed for her father."

The man wept again at hearing this; then, wiping the tears from his eyes, he went on: —

"I don't want to tire yer ladyship, ye see."

"There is no danger of that," said Kate.

"Thank ye, me lady. I'll tell ye, thin. Ye see, me lady, it was a long time we was on the ocean, for we went a long way; and thin there wasn't always a breeze to git us along, so we'd have to lie still many a day, an' I kept sick a long time. As I told ye, me lady, I began to pray. It was strange enough at first; but I began to believe that them words Sam read in his Bible was meant for me, and thin I loved to pray. Sam was glad thin, for

I began to grow aisy. I liked everybody and every thing, only meself. When I was able to look out upon the great broad ocean, it seemed to me as if 'twas made by that very God that Sam read about, an' that said he would be my Father.

"I thought about my dear little Dora, an' her mother, that I left with nothin', and thin I was distracted like; for there I was sick, an' a great ways off on the big waters. I told Sam me trouble; an', says he, 'Have ye told the Lord about it, Patrick? If ye have not,' says he, 'go an' tell him every little thing that makes ye feel bad. He can help you.' Thin I thought I hadn't told him how I wanted to do somethin' for me family, like a Christian man, an' went right off and told him the whole; an', says I, in me prayer ye see, me lady, 'Tell me what to do, — I don't know.' Thin I felt as if I must git Sam to read me somethin' about it out of his Bible; an' I axed him, an' he did. He read this, 'Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.'

"'Thin,' said he, 'what can you do this minute, Pat?'

"I tried to think, me lady, but I couldn't think of nothin' that would help me woman and childers. I told Sam so.

"'Yes,' says he, 'you can. Ye can pray for them, — ye can ask our great Father to take care of them. I do this for my poor mother an' sisters,' says he, 'every night an' day; an' I feel that my prayer is heard.'

"'An' I'll do this,' says I.

"'There is more you can do, Patrick,' says Sam.

"'What's that?' says I.

"'You can be patient, now you are sick, an' thus suffer

God's will. That will be doing what is your duty now; an' that is all you can do, — it is all God expects of you.'

"After this, me lady, I felt better; for I asked Jesus to be a friend to me family, and I believed he would, because Sam's Bible said his word never failed. 'Twas a great while, me lady, afore I could move about; an', whin the vessel got into port, me lady, I was that weak, I couldn't work. So they carried me to the hospital, where they took care of me for many a month; an' whin I was that better I could work a little, me lady, ye see, I was in a foreign land, an' couldn't git near me family; but I kept on praying. I'd a died if it hadn't ben for that, I thinks, me lady. But I grew stouter, an' worked enough to take care of meself; an' thin, after a spell, I did more. But thin, me lady, I didn't do much; an' I couldn't git ahead much, because I's often sick. The doctor said I had hurt me constitution by my old bad ways, an' perhaps I should never git as well as I once was. This was sad news to me ye see, yer ladyship; but thin I felt I desarved worse'n that I'd had, so I was still."

"But you found it true, that 'the way of transgressors is hard,' didn't you, Mr. Smith?"

"Indade I did, me lady; but I think I am glad now, after six years an' more, to be able to git back here an' thank them what's been gude to me family, though they be all gone."

"Don't you feel as if your prayers for them were heard?" asked Kate.

"That I do," was the reply; "an' more was done for 'em than I thought could be."

"I trust Dora's prayers for you will be answered, and

that you will be enabled to watch and pray, endure to the end, fighting against sin, and meet her in heaven, to part no more for ever."

"God grant all this!" was his tearful rejoinder.

"I have a little keepsake to give you, Mr. Smith," said Kate; and she arose, and left the room. In a few minutes she returned, and handed the bereaved father a small likeness of his daughter, with a small ringlet of her hair.

"Do you know these, Mr. Smith?" she asked.

"I don't believe I should, if you hadn't given 'em to me," responded the man; "but does this picture look jist like her?"

"Yes: it is an excellent likeness of her. Just before her last illness it was taken; and this lock of hair was taken from her head only a few days before her death."

"The little darlint!" said her father, kissing both tokens almost passionately. "She did forgive her bad father, but I can't! She would be glad to know I'm a better man, — wouldn't she, me lady?"

"She does know it, and has rejoiced already over your repentance, my friend."

"Does the Bible say this?" asked he.

"It does say that there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth."

"I'm glad I know that. I'll like to think of it, ye see, me lady."

"I hope you will, and be comforted by remembering it," was Kate's reply.

When this truly interesting visitor arose to take his leave, he was invited to call again, not only by Kate, but

by her mother, who had heard, in an adjoining apartment, the relation he had given of himself. Mary Winthrop, too, came forward to congratulate him upon the blessing of having such a beautiful child as his Dora had become, in heaven."

"I thank ye all, me ladies, an' I shall love ye all, if ye all knew and loved me child. A thousand, thousand thanks to yer ladyships," and Patrick Smith bowed, and departed.

"'God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform,'"

said Mrs. Felton. "I hope we shall not be ungrateful to him for having permitted us to act as his agents, in doing good to this man's family. I have felt, this morning, that it is blessed to give."

Mary Winthrop and Kate heartily responded to this sentiment. Old Maggie wiped the tears from her face, saying, —

"I like outlandish men like this one. I wish we could know more such."

Susan had been an interested listener and spectator, during the visit of the Irishman; and, after he was gone, she told her friends that she hoped one day to see her own father as humble a Christian as Dora's father now appeared.

"Don't be weary in supplicating the mercy of our Heavenly Father, in his behalf, even thoug hthe blessing sought *seems* to tarry; for it will come, and will *not* tarry," said Mrs. Felton.

The subject brought before the minds of this loving household by the event of the morning was made the sub-

ject of conversation by its members during the day. They could not dismiss it, and did not wish to, if they could. Kate's heart was filled with gratitude and love to the Being who had put it into her heart to pity and relieve the sorrow of a little child. It was long ere sleep visited her eyelids, after she betook herself to repose, on the night after her interview with Dora's father. Her thoughts were busy with the past. The perusal of some of memory's pages afforded real joy; others disturbed her a little.

She saw recorded in memory's book every thing connected with her several journeys south; but the most interesting page she read was that on which was imaged the face and figure of one whom she had ever since desired to behold again.

"I am weak," thought she, "thus to dwell in fancy upon that interview. I must struggle against such weakness, for it may even now be a sin to indulge it. He may be married ere this; and I must rise above this foolishness, and cease to think of this person."

Thus Kate resolved; but she found it one thing to resolve, and another to act. The image thus forbidden to enter her heart would intrude itself uninvited. Kate well knew his character. She had become acquainted with it from incidental remarks made by her friends. His taste, too, had often been the subject of remark in her presence. This knowledge, joined to what she had learned during their slight acquaintance, assured her that their feelings harmonized on most subjects, if not all. This led Kate ever to wish he could know of that which was to her most interesting.

"Would not Dr. Stonely have been interested in hearing the recital of Patrick Smith this morning?" thought she.

This was a wayward thought; and she hastened to banish it by throwing her head upon her pillow, and courting —

"Nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep."

The agency thus sought came at length, and refreshed her with its kindly influence.

CHAPTER XIII.

"Man liveth from hour to hour, and knoweth not what may happen."
TUPPER.

NOT many days after Kate received this visit from the father of her loved *protégé* Dora, a letter was received by her from Julia Abbott. This letter, which contained much that was interesting to her friend, had been accidentally delayed on its way for some days. Among other little items of intelligence, Julia informed Kate that she might expect her arrival at Rosefield early in the month of June.

"I am," said Julia, "to be married to a gentleman by the name of Armstrong, and am to visit you on my bridal tour. Now don't laugh over this letter, my dear friend, nor look perplexed and sober neither. Don't think I am the most romantic girl in the world, either, because I haven't had a long courtship. If you do, I shall convince you that you are wrong, when I see you, which I am quite impatient to do."

June came, with all its vernal loveliness. The garden belonging to Mrs. Felton's mansion was in an excellent state of cultivation. The old gardener prided himself upon his forest of rose-bushes, as Susan called the beautiful rows of these little trees, now laden with roses of many varieties of hue and beauty. The sweetbrier, now in its glory, perfumed the air with its fragrance. The twining honey-suckle, too, added its graces to adorn the premises, mingled with the luxuriant jessamine, and many less obtrusive flowers that were inmates of the garden.

Old Jacob had been informed by Maggie that southern company was expected; and this information had aroused his ambition to its highest pitch to see his floral department in the highest state of improvement. He was gratified in his attempts, and told Kate that he didn't believe the gardens at the South were handsomer than theirs, if they did have more sun. Kate's opinion coincided with his own, and she congratulated him upon his qualifications as a gardener. This delighted the old man; for he loved to feel that he merited the commendation of "Miss Kate," as he called her; for he knew that she was too sincere to flatter him.

At the time appointed, Julia and her companion arrived at Mrs. Felton's. They were attended by only one servant; and that was Hagar. Julia proudly presented her husband, who was a fine-looking personage, rather above the medium height, with a countenance not strongly marked, though on the whole prepossessing. He was one of those characters, Kate thought, as Julia presented him, that would not be long remembered when out of sight; still he was pleasant in his manners, easy and affable, and apparently much devoted to her he had chosen for his bosom friend.

Julia was even more lovely in womanhood than she had been in girlhood. There was a thoughtfulness now, blended with her natural gaiety, which added loveliness to her manner, and made her doubly fascinating.

Not long after her arrival at Rosefield, as she was sitting in her room, talking to Kate and Mary Winthrop, her husband having gone to some lecture the ladies did not care to attend, she asked Kate why she did not get married.

"Because I have a very good reason for remaining unmarried," answered Kate.

"It is not because you could not have been, long ago," said Julia. "I know that from Mr. Marshly and Mr. Stanly, whom you warned me not to become too much interested in."

"Indeed!" said Kate, blushing, and looking at Mary, to learn if possible, by the expression of her countenance, how this statement affected her.

Mary laughed heartily at her friend's confusion.

"Kate," said she, "this is not news to me, at least so far as Mr. Marshly is concerned. He has told me all about it. But you have not told me any thing of Mr. Stanly, though once I suspected that gentleman was interested in your welfare to an uncommon degree."

"It was not necessary that I should say any thing about him. If I had loved him, and become his, this would have been *known;* but I did neither."

"It is well you did not. Your life would have been made unhappy with him. It could not have been otherwise," remarked Julia.

"You knew him, then?" asked Mary.

"Yes, and all too well for my peace of mind, for a time. At the time I received your unwelcome warning, Kate, I imagined I loved Mr. Stanly very much; but I did not, as I now see. I only loved what I imagined him to be. You know," she continued, "that he was a person of most agreeable manners. Every look, tone, and gesture, was pleasant to an unsophisticated girl like me. I thought him a splendid man, and good withal, too. He was not long in learning the state of my feelings, and re-

ciprocated, as I then believed, heartily, every affectionate sentiment I cherished towards him. He offered me his hand, and I referred him to my father, who was at that time absent from home. Father's stay was protracted some weeks, and Mr Stanly endeavored to obtain a promise that I would become his wife, even if my father should not at first approve my choice; but I would not promise any thing farther than that I would abide my father's choice. He was not pleased with this, and accused me of want of affection. I strove to convince him that he was wrong, and he appeared satisfied to await my father's decision. But this he was prevented from doing by my droll cousin Joe Stanton. He is odd, and sometimes ludicrous; but he is a pure-minded, straightforward man as ever was created. He is noble, too, and despises any thing like meanness, even in his nearest friend.

"Joe called upon me one morning, after I had spent a delightful evening with Mr. Stanly, who had assured me many times, in conversation during the evening, that money was the last thing he thought of, in looking forward to the matrimonial engagement he hoped to form with me. He even said that sometimes he wished I was destitute of property altogether, that his disinterestedness could be made manifest. I was delighted at this, as you may both suppose; for I really believed him, he seemed so devotedly unselfish.

"Cousin Joe threw his cap down carelessly that morning, as was his wont, when he entered the house, saying, —

"'Good morning, Cousin Julia. I hope you are alone, for I wish to have a private talk with you.'

"I told him I was quite alone, and ready to talk as long as he might wish to have me.

"'I shall speak first, and ask you a question which you must answer candidly. Remember I love you as a sister, coz. Will you promise me this?' asked he.

"I promised.

"'Now,' said he, 'answer this question. Are you engaged to Mr. Stanly?'

"I answered truthfully, telling him exactly how matters stood between that gentleman and myself. He looked at me with his great truthful eyes in such a manner that I knew I was believed.

"'Now, another question,' said he. 'Will you place yourself and fortune in the keeping of one who boasts that he would rather not be trammelled with a wife, but must marry some one with property, as he could not get money without to pay the price of his iniquity, or, in other words, to silence those whom he has injured by the lawless indulgence of his base passions?'

"I looked at him with astonishment, while he was speaking, and then replied that I would not, if I knew what I was doing.

"'Well, then,' said he, 'don't faint away, nor go into hysterics, when I assure you that Mr. Stanly's motives in seeking to marry you are such as I have named.'

"I did not faint, but I was conscious of turning pale. My heart beat violently, while I exclaimed, —

"'Can it be possible! Are you sure, Cousin Joe, that what you have said is true?'

"'Very true, my dear coz, else I should not have told you,' he replied. 'I heard these sentiments, as they fell

from his own lips. He did not know that a third person was being informed at the same time that he was boasting of his success in concealing his guilt, and passing for a highly respectable gentleman. I was a wilful eaves-dropper, coz; but I got in such a fix, I could not help being a listener. I could see Stanly while he was talking, but he did not see me until afterwards, if at all; as I was, at the time, entirely screened from observation by the curtains of a window recess, while I sat upon the window-seat with my limbs in a horizontal position.'

"'Then it is true,' said I.

"'Very true,' replied Joe; 'and I am sorry and disappointed. Still, I was glad when I was an unwilling listener to these disclosures of character, because it would be a sad thing for my dear little coz to fall into the claws of a wolf in sheep's clothing.'

"'And I am glad,' said I, beginning to be indignant at the thought that I had been well-nigh caught in the trap set for me by a villain. 'It seems impossible, Cousin Joe, that Mr. Stanly can be such a man.'

"'But it is true, upon my honor,' said he, 'that I heard what I have told you uttered by his own lips.'

"'I believe you,' I replied, 'and thank you for acquainting me with the fact so soon.'

"I felt mortified, vexed, disappointed, perplexed, and I hardly know what else, at that moment. I wept violently, passionately, for a while. Cousin Joe sat still, looking at me with an expression of sympathy upon his ingenuous countenance, that made me like him better than ever; for I had supposed, from his love of the comic, that he would have painted my position rather ludicrously to him-

self, and brought a similar view of it before my unfortunate self. Not so: he was tender and thoughtful towards me, though severe enough towards Mr. Stanly.

"'A man feels degraded, abused, insulted,' said he, 'by such base conduct in one whose image resembles his own. It is this makes me stark mad, and no mistake about it; for such meanness makes your sex judge of mine by the base standard of these wretches, —

"Who smile and smile, and murder while they smile,"

as one writer observes. Good men are looked upon with suspicion on account of these detestable hypocrites. If they would only show their colors outright, one could pass by on the other side of their influence; but, as it is, every decent fellow is obliged to bear a part of the blame these infernal actions bring upon the community. Then just think of a fellow's taking advantage of a man's weakness in loving gold, and bribing him to secrecy, after having violated all that is dear to him as a husband. I say, Cousin Julia, if I didn't feel it was wicked to swear, I should swear roundly, and no mistake, at these high-life abominations. There is one thing, though,' he continued, 'about it: they can't bribe to secrecy in the other world; a fellow 'll get his dues there.'

"'That is a comfort,' said I; 'but I hope no one I have ever known will enter that world without first repenting of his sins.'

"'You feel tender towards Stanly, and I don't wonder,' he said. 'He is a splendid-looking man, and very agreeable too. I don't wonder you like him.'

"'I *don't* like him,' I replied. 'I like what I thought he was.'

"'Now, that's right, coz!' said Joe, emphatically. 'Give me you yet. But how are you agoing to dismiss him?'

"'I have not as yet concluded,' I answered. 'Would it be best not to see him again? That would be the easiest way of doing it.'

"'I don't know. I think your sex generally manage these things best, without man's advice.'

"I thanked him for this compliment, and set myself to study what course to pursue. I thought it would be doing as I would like to be done by, if I saw him, and told him just what I had heard; although I shrank from the task. It was hard; but I determined to perform it. I could just then, I believe, have nerved myself to any thing, my feelings were in such a state of excitement.

"In the afternoon of that same day Mr. Stanly came to see me, to learn, as he told me, whether I was to become his; and he did learn the fact, as Cousin Joe afterwards said, 'with a vengeance.'

"He came in with the same gentlemanly, loving manner, towards me that he had ever assumed. I was sitting alone in the parlor, and received him coolly, but politely. I soon laid before him what I had heard, *verbatim*. He turned very, very pale, and asked if I could possibly believe him guilty of all this. I told him I was sorry to be obliged to do so, and, had this been a mere report, should not have hearkened to it an instant; but that, having been told by one whom I had never known guilty of a falsehood, I must believe it.

"'But,' he asked, 'do you know that this friend of yours has not been misinformed?'

"'I think he is certain of what he told me, because he heard it from your own lips, and saw you while you were saying it,' said I.

"He looked confounded, and asked, in a husky tone, if I was willing to tell him who told me these things against him.

"'My cousin, Joseph Stanton,' I replied. 'Do you know him?'

"'I do,' was his faint rejoinder.

"I then informed him of Cousin Joe's whereabouts at the time he overheard his boasting in regard to me.

"'And now,' said I, 'Mr. Stanly, I am sorry you are such a person; you are not at all the gentleman I loved. That one is somewhere, and I believe I shall see him some day. I only imagined you were he. I loved the character I fancied you were. Ignorantly I gave the hand of friendship to an impure person, from whom every virtuous woman ought to withhold it; but now I say to you, Mr. Stanly, that you must not visit me again. Go, and seek repentance for your misdeeds, else I can never wish to behold your face again. I wish you to reform, but fear you never will."

"I then turned from him, bid him good-by, and ran up stairs to think over the events of the day. I had kept up bravely in Mr. Stanly's presence, and I was determined he should not know how deeply my pride was wounded; but, when I was alone, I gave vent to my feelings, and wept until I was well-nigh sick."

Julia paused.

"You did well, Julia," said Kate. "I wish all our sex would take this same decided stand against impurity that you have. I feel, I know, it would save much mental as well as physical suffering in our land. Besides, it would raise the standard of morality; for it is not vanity for us to believe that men, however much they may degrade themselves, do value the smiles of virtuous woman."

"I believe that is true," said Mary Winthrop; "but do, Mrs. Armstrong, tell us if your husband knows of your heart-adventure with this Mr. Stanly."

"He knows all about it," was the reply. "I knew him, — that is, I had met him a few times before I was so much interested in the other gent. Soon after Mr. Stanly was dismissed by me, he left the place, — he took French leave; but I was glad to have him go. Mr. Armstrong soon became a frequent visitor at my father's, and you already know what is the result of those visits; but I assure you that I could never have believed there could exist so great a difference in men, as I have found between him and the one I thought I had loved. Mr. Armstrong has never said such foolish things to me as the other has; and, when he thinks I err, he does not scruple to tell me so, — very kindly, to be sure, is his manner of doing this, but still he does it."

"Do you take the liberty to reciprocate this kindness?" inquired Kate.

"No, not much: at least, I have seen but seldom an occasion to speak, if ever. Mr. Armstrong, however, wishes me to do so frankly: he seems to think, as you do, that those who are to walk life's pathway together must be united in the sacred bonds of friendship, as well as

drawn by the more captivating cords of affection. Friendship, he says, may and does exist where conjugal love does not nor cannot; but the latter cannot long endure without the former for its basis. I like my husband all the better for not pretending to think me an angel," she continued; "because I can act without a feeling of restraint caused by the constant fear that I may do something to alter his too good opinion of me."

Mr. Armstrong now came in, and the conversation changed to other subjects. Susan entered the room soon after, and brought a message to Kate, who arose and accompanied her to the kitchen.

"Another call from Dora's father," said she, as she left the room.

Patrick Smith begged to be excused for calling at so late an hour, but felt that he could not leave the place without offering a token of gratitude to her who had done more than any other person for his family.

"I didn't know jest what yer ladyship would like," said he; "but I saw some perty boxes, an' so I thought I'd jest git one of 'em for yer ladyship. An' I hope, if it plazes ye, me lady, ye'll take it an' kape it, an' whin ye see it not forgit that Patrick Smith remembers yer kindness, me lady."

Kate accepted the gift, and sincerely thanked the donor.

"I did not need any thing to remind me of your gratitude, Mr. Smith," said she, "but I will keep this workbox as a valued present; while I will ever pray that the best of Heaven's blessings may attend your pathway through life, and that you and I may meet again here, — if not here, in that world to which our dear little Dora has gone."

Mr. Smith then arose to depart, saying that he expected to leave the place early on the following morning; and he thought he should return to his native land, and take care of his poor old mother, whom he had many years neglected. Kate commended the man for this determination. She took him cordially by the hand, and bade him farewell.

"How true it is," said she, on returning to her friends, "that religion is something besides creeds, forms, and words! Now here is this poor illiterate Irishman taught by the Spirit his present obligations, and he is going back to perform his long-neglected duty towards an infirm parent.

'Words that breathe and thoughts that burn'

are desirable on the subject of piety as well as others; but it is the doing, after all, that proves the sincerity of one's profession."

Kate showed her present to her friends. It was neat and tasteful, though not a workbox of the nicest kind. She was greatly pleased with this gift. The expression of feeling that prompted the offering was delightful to her.

Mr. Armstrong appreciated her feelings, and remarked that he supposed she valued that present more than she would had it been a diamond ring, given with a less noble motive.

"I certainly do," was the reply; "for —

'It is not the value it can boast
That makes me love this offering most,
But 'tis the sacred feeling.' "

"Mr. Armstrong," said Julia, "has been suggesting the

idea of following your example, Kate, in trying to do good to the degraded white population at home."

"I rejoice to hear this," was Kate's rejoinder.

"I had, like most people," said the gentleman, "thought these poor whites too degraded to be benefitted; but my observation of what you have effected has convinced me that I have erred in judgment upon this subject. I believe missionary labor would not be lost upon home heathen."

"We must not expect that every poor white girl can become, by the use of means, what Susan Wilkins is," said Julia.

"No," remarked Kate: "such a mind as hers is not common, even in the best circles of society; but we do see the clownish and rude exchanging places, I might say birthrights, with the naturally refined and gentle. Sometimes, as if for some mysterious purpose, nature leaves a clown in a palace, while she hides a king in some mean hovel. It was one of these unriddled acts that gave Susan to my care. Her nature is queenly, although her parentage is low."

"But," said Julia, "if I do not find a diamond to polish, I may do something towards polishing a rougher substance; and the most unsightly stone may be improved by passing through certain processes."

"Let me know if you meet with encouragement in carrying out your plans," said Kate, as the friends separated for the night.

Soon after this conversation, the bridal party left Rosefield. They had all enjoyed their stay at Mrs. Felton's, but *most* of all Hagar, who was most sincerely attached to Kate.

Her shrewdness of mind had led her to infer that Julia had been influenced by this friend in her conduct towards herself. She was now a free woman. Julia had given her free papers ere her marriage; but the kindness with which she had been treated for a year past, by Julia, endeared her mistress to this faithful servant so much, that she could not part with her, for a time at least.

"If any thing happens, dese yer papers will keep me from bein' sold off ter auction, wont they, Miss Felton?" asked Hagar, one day.

"Yes, they certainly will," was the reply.

"I'se glad on it; for, now missus is good to me, I'd a heap ruther stay with her. All I'se hated 'bout it is feelin' afeered of somethin' or other's happenin', so I'd have ter be sold; but now I shan't think of that no more."

It was with a light heart that she accompanied her *now* kind friend on the remainder of her tour.

CHAPTER XIV.

"Riches take to themselves wings, and fly away."

We will now leave Kate and those dear to her at Rosefield, in the enjoyment of each other's society, and other kindred blessings, while we take a trip across the Atlantic, and visit the city of Paris. We go thither to seek an old acquaintance, of whom we have not received any intelligence for even more than a year, — it may be a longer period.

She was then, in company with her husband and eldest daughter, making the tour of the continent, — reserved, exclusive, and haughty as when we first saw her, while she was riding in the cars, with Kate and others, from Rosefield to Albany. Mrs. Upton has prevailed upon her husband to spend some months in the city of taste and gaiety; and she is exulting in the idea of being enabled to enjoy a season in such a manner as to make her an object of envy to many of her fashionable acquaintances at home.

She dreams not of change, even if she reflects at all, which is hardly possible. Her butterfly kind of life precludes reflection. She lives on; and the days fly on apace, — the present, if possible, always exceeding its yesterday in gaiety and dissipation. The lodgings taken by Mr. Upton were in one of the most splendid hotels in the city. Nothing was wanting to add to the luxury and elegance of the apartments occupied by these votaries of fashion;

for it was pleasure, and pleasure alone, they sought in their sojourn in the metropolis of France.

One morning, upon awaking at a late hour, after a night of excitement and fatigue, Mrs. Upton was somewhat surprised to find that her husband was not in her room, as usual. She was startled at observing the appearance of the bed; for it plainly indicated that her husband's place had been unoccupied during the night, or rather morning. It was nearly three o'clock before Mrs. Upton had fallen asleep herself. She arose, made a hasty toilet, without ringing for assistance, and hurried to the sleeping-room of her daughter.

"Mina," said she, approaching the bed, "Mina! wake up! I am concerned about your father. He is not at home, and has not been all night."

Mina opened her eyes, and roused herself to arise and dress. It was much earlier than she had been accustomed to leave her bed, and she was feeling the reaction of the excitement of the previous night; still she sympathized with her mother's anxiety, and they together entered her *boudoir*. They seated themselves, and spent some little time in vain speculations in regard to the non-appearance of the husband and father.

Anxiety was depicted on the countenances of both mother and daughter. They were attired in beautiful morning dresses of embroidered merino. The luxurious tresses of Mina were tastefully arranged, but her glossy curls hung around a pallid face. Neither did Mrs. Upton neglect her personal appearance. Her hair was braided with care, and tastefully confined under a superb morning cap.

Wearied with surmises, and eager momentary expecta-

tion of him who came not, Mrs. Upton reclined upon her couch of crimson velvet, while Mina looked over a morning paper to while away the time. Breakfast they thought not of, for appetite was wanting. They were silent during some moments. The mother closed her eyes, as if courting repose, when suddenly they were aroused by the sound as of many voices in the hall below. Next came the sound of many footsteps ascending the stairway. It seemed, as they drew near to the entrance of the apartment where Mrs. Upton and Mina were listening with intense eagerness, that some heavy burden was being borne. Unconscious of the horror that awaited them, yet tortured by an indefinable feeling of fear, Mina arose involuntarily, and approached the door. She laid her hand upon the fastening, but the noise of the footsteps she had before heard rapidly receded. She heard the words, "Carry him into their parlor," pronounced by a voice she recognized as that of one of the proprietors of the hotel. In an instant, she had opened the door, and passed from the *boudoir* into the hall.

What is the matter?" asked she of a gentleman standing near the door; "is any one hurt?"

The gentleman replied, without being aware of whom he was addressing, "Some one has fallen in a duel. It is an American gentleman, I believe."

"Did you hear his name?" asked Mina, in hurried accents.

"Yes: it was 'Upton,' I think."

"Merciful God!" exclaimed she, "it is my father! But is he dead, or only wounded?" inquired she.

Ere the gentleman could reply, Mrs. Upton rushed into the hall.

"Where is my husband?" she shrieked. "Oh, tell me! tell me!" and she hastened towards the parlor door, which was open, and crowded with persons who seemed eager to see what was passing within. Her steps, however, were arrested before she reached the threshold, and she was led back to her own room, and laid upon the sofa. Mina was near her; and the loud hysterical cries of both mother and daughter resounded through the house. For hours there was no abatement of their agony. They knew not then all the suffering that awaited them; but they realized that they were bereaved, strangers too, — except in those circles where the wretched are soon forgotton, — and far from home.

The violence of their grief abated towards evening; and Mrs. Upton, whose physical nature was exhausted by the indulgence of her great sorrow, lost for a time the recollection of her trouble in sleep. Mina ceased her loud lamentations, but refused to lie down, even when urged to do so. She could not sleep, she said, and did not like to leave her mother.

We pass over the remaining hours that intervened, before the body must be laid in the grave. Sadly, indeed, they passed to the bereaved ones! Still the day came all too quickly, when they were to gaze for the last time upon one whom they loved, and who had been to them an indulgent father and husband. The moment of parting with the dear remains was one of agony to the mourners; but it went by, and the body was borne away, followed by many who had known the deceased in life. A few there were who sympathized deeply with the afflicted mother and daughter, and followed the dead with feelings

of sorrow to its last repository, where both taste and elegance combined to prevent, if possible, the gloomy pall of death to be heeded by those who visited the place. The funeral over, the world moved on as before.

Mrs. Upton felt her loneliness increased, her sorrow unassuaged. She yielded to the overwhelming current of her grief, took to her couch, and refused to be comforted. Alas, she had not known her only source of comfort in this trying season! Mina shared her mother's sorrow, but seemed to remember that it was necessary for them to look into the state of their affairs. Her father's purse had been handed to her by those who had found it, as they were preparing him for the grave. It contained but a trifle of money. This had startled Mina; and she felt that something must be done to arouse her mother to necessary action. The thought of calling her mother's attention to those matters which had always been attended to by her father was painful. She felt the need of a judicious friend to give her counsel. The thought would intrude itself, that her mother might have had more friends now to look to, if she had evinced more regard for others in the days of her prosperity; but this reflection could avail little now.

Mina felt there was a change of manner towards her, in those who had heretofore come at her bidding. She might imagine this, but she feared it was too true. In a state of perplexity she lingered near her mother's bedside, and strove to divert the mind that was almost crushed by the heavy trial it had borne from the thoughts of its own grief. A few days passed that brought no change; then a new source of sorrow was opened to the view of both

Mrs. Upton and Mina. To the former, it was a cloud big with mercy-drops; for it aroused her faculties, and probably prevented her from becoming a monomaniac.

The proprietor of the establishment in which they resided had been a patient creditor to Mr. Upton, who had been for some time in arrears for his lodgings; and he felt that now his claim ought to be recognized, and the debt discharged. Rumor, with her hundred tongues, whispered that the man had died insolvent; and Mr. Bowman went respectfully, yet anxiously, to Mrs. Upton, to learn what was the fact in regard to this report.

He found her brooding, in the very luxury of grief, over the death of her husband. She shrank from the intrusion of his presence; but he bowed politely, seated himself in the chair to which Mina pointed him, and introduced his unpleasant errand. Mrs. Upton was aroused, her pride was wounded; and she demanded an explanation of the state in which her husband's affairs had been left of the agent, — a man of excellent character, who had just arrived in Paris on the evening preceding the death of Mr. Upton.

The agent informed her of facts of which she had before been ignorant. He told her that the estates of her husband at home had been mortgaged to a large amount, to sustain their expenses abroad. Mrs. Upton remembered having put her name to papers at different times, but never stopped to inquire into the character of the instrument she signed. It was, she said, enough for her to manage her own affairs; she could not trouble herself to know her husband's business: if he only had money to give her when she asked for it, she cared not how he came in possession of it.

She was aware that he had gambled at times after he went to Paris, but never dreamed of his involving himself in difficulty by so doing. In the kindest manner the agent told her all. He had followed Mr. Upton to the billiard-rooms on the night before his tragical end, and he endeavored to persuade him to abstain from playing. He entreated him to go to his lodgings with himself, as he wished to lay before him some matters of great importance to himself and family.

"I cannot, I will not, hearken to you now," was Mr. Upton's mad answer. "All I have is perilled: if I do not win back a portion of what I have lost this night, my family will be penniless hereafter."

"The sequel of this determination you already know," said the agent. "He accused his antagonist of foul play in his destruction, and thus provoked the challenge, which, being accepted, was the means of terminating his life."

"Is all father's property gone?" asked Mina.

"I am sorry to be obliged to inform you that such is the case. Every thing was involved at home; and I came here, upon my own responsibility, to see your father, and persuade him to return home, and make, if possible, some compromise with his creditors before matters grew worse."

"O my God!" exclaimed Mrs. Upton, "what am I to do?"

The agent regarded her with a look of pity.

"Command my services, madam," said he; "I will do for you whatever I can."

Mrs. Upton thanked him in an abstracted manner; her mind was too much occupied to admit of her doing so

differently. Mina expressed much gratitude. This friend had never been a favorite with the mother: he was too straightforward and independent in a course of right, to be agreeable to a person who shrank from hearing unwelcome truths. He had more than once suggested, rather indirectly, that certain retrenchments were preferable to a total failure, and loss of every thing. After the death of Mr. Upton, he had remained near the widow awaiting her summons; for he would not appear before her as a silent rebuke, as he must now seem, without having been called to appear.

Mina suggested that they should start as soon as possible for home. The agent kindly concurred in this suggestion; and Mrs. Upton felt it was desirable to get home, but how to defray the expenses of a voyage she could not imagine.

"I have not enough by me," said she, "to pay for second-rate accommodations on board a steamer."

The agent pledged himself to see that a passage was secured for them, if they would like to leave Paris as soon as that would oblige them to do.

"You shall return," he said, "with the accommodations such as you enjoyed on your outward passage."

They did so; and, to man's honor be it spoken, an appeal was not made in vain. Many gentlemen, who, although almost entirely strangers to the ladies thus providentially thrown upon their charity, felt it a duty to aid them. A respectable purse was thus made up through the instrumentality of Mr. Upton's agent, which, he was well aware, would be greatly needed by his stricken family should the absent ones be spared to reach their native land.

The youngest children of Mrs. Upton's, Frank and Delia, had been placed at boarding-schools previous to their parents' leaving America, where they were to remain until their return home.

What a return this had proved! Mrs. Upton laid in her berth during most of her passage. She was not sea-sick, for her heart-sickness prevented this. Mina suffered some in this way; but a feeling of despondency and grief prevailed over every other. The mother and daughter attracted much attention by their uncommon taciturnity and sadness. They seemed to create an atmosphere of gloom that filled the cabin.

A short trip, and they were landed at New York. From thence they went to the place where Frank and Delia were expecting their arrival. We pass over the meeting of these bereaved ones without dwelling upon its agony: it may be more easily imagined than described. Mrs. Upton brought to her little ones the sorrowful news that they were not only fatherless, but poor.

Oh, that one little word! How strangely painful it sounds to those who are to learn for the first time its meaning by experience.

Mrs. Upton said she thought it best to go to some large city, where, if she must be poor, she could hide herself amid the crowd.

"Those that I have heretofore looked down upon shall not have the privilege of returning the compliment. I shall go where I am unknown."

A bad resolve this, yet it was executed with little delay. The small remnant of furniture left by the creditors had been stored; and Mrs. Upton sold every article of it that

could possibly be spared from housekeeping on a very limited scale. What then remained she took, with her children, to the London of America, to lose herself, as she expressed it, with her poverty, in an unconcerned crowd.

CHAPTER XV.

"Feelings of unremembered pleasure, such, perhaps,
As have no slight or trival influence
On that best portion of a good man's life,—
His little nameless, unremembered acts
Of kindness and of love." *Wordsworth.*

A QUIET summer sped rapidly away to our friends at Rosefield. Early in September, they received a visit from their New York friends, Mr. Fielding and lady. Mr. Marshly also visited Mary; "but it must," he said, "be a bird-like visit," because he was needed at the new home he had chosen, where a dwelling-house was already in process of erection, and where many hands were employed in clearing land to be cultivated the next season. He spoke in terms of admiration of the country, and of the plan he had thus far executed in respect to his men.

"It is a glorious country," said he, "and I am glad I have contemplated this removal."

He obtained a promise from Mrs. Felton and Kate that they would accompany Mary, some time during the next year, to his western home, if he should get things in a state to make them comfortable. He expected, he said, to complete his house, and make the surroundings somewhat inviting, by another autumn. He had already had some fruit-trees set out, and some stray natives of the soil had been grafted into good fruit-trees by a skilful hand; so that he had already begun to look forward to the time when an abundance of fine fruit would repay the comparatively small effort of its cultivation.

When Mr. and Mrs. Fielding returned to New York, they were accompanied by Kate, Mary Winthrop, and Mr. Marshly. The latter had some business to transact in that city, which would detain him for a few days; so that it was a matter of no regret to him that Mary was to be, during the time, where he could see her daily. A few days previous to leaving Rosefield on this tour of pleasure, Kate had met Carrie Stonely in the street. The child that was was fast becoming a young lady. She recognized Kate with the peculiar pleasure she had ever evinced at meeting this wayside friend, and her emotions were reciprocated by Kate, — from whom the image of herself and father was never long absent.

"Don't you think," said Carrie, innocently, "that my father has not got married yet!"

"Is he going to be married?" asked Kate.

"I don't know. He says he wishes me to have another good mother, but he don't know as he shall be permitted to give me such an one, or the one that he is desirous to. I wish," she continued, earnestly, "that you, Miss Felton, could be my second mamma."

"What a girl!" said Kate, laughing. "We don't know what will be best for us. "If you should have me, you might wish I was somewhere else, soon."

"I don't believe that," answered Carrie. "Do you ever visit our city, Miss Felton?"

"New York, you mean?"

"I do."

"I am now expecting to go there soon."

"I hope I shall see you there. Where will you stop?"

"At Mr. Fielding's, — Fifth Avenue."

"Oh! I am well acquainted with Mrs. Fielding's sister, and I intend to go with her and make you a call, if I go home before you leave the city."

"I shall like very much to see you, in New York or anywhere else," was Kate's rejoinder.

It was with mingled feelings that Kate joined her friends in this journey. She hated to confess the fact, even to herself, — and yet fact it was, — that her heart always beat quicker when she was nearing the place where Dr. Stonely resided. In vain she asked herself the question, "How can I be so foolish?" The only answer she ever received was an accelerated pulsation of that wilful, wayward member, the heart. After her arrival in New York, her thoughts, oftener than ever before, reverted to the only person she had ever known who had engrossed so large a portion of her thoughts.

Mr. Fielding loved to rally her upon continuing year after year unmarried; it was certain, he said, that there was a kindred mind somewhere in a like situation, waiting for some propitious moment to bring them together. He was not quite sure who this personage was, but said he should not wonder if it should prove to be Dr. Stonely. It was evident to this gentleman's mind that he was waiting for some one, else he would have chosen a companion ere then, from among the many splendid women with whom he was acquainted.

Kate felt annoyed even when this subject was referred to by her friends. They could not know how much so: if they had even surmised the thing, they would have been silent.

In another part of the city, not three miles distant from the residence of Mr. Fielding, stood a handsome dwelling-house, with marble columns in front, and steps of the same material leading to the door, upon which was a silver plate inscribed with the name of the resident. The appointments of the place, and all its surroundings, corresponded well with its exterior.

One morning, not long after Kate's arrival in the city, the proprietor of this mansion was cheered while at the breakfast-table by receiving a letter from his absent daughter. He broke the seal with fond parental eagerness, and ran his eye over various little items of mutual interest to himself and child. Near the bottom of the second page his attention was fixed for some moments. At the commencement of a paragraph she asked the question, "Have you forgotten Miss Felton?"

She then went on, saying, "I have seen her. I hope you will become more acquainted with her; for she is, I expect, in your city at present, visiting at Mr. Fielding's. Father, it cannot do any hurt, and I hope you will not think me bold if I tell you that I wish Miss Felton could be my mother."

"Dear Carrie!" said Dr. Stonely, mentally (for this gentleman was none other than he); "she does not think how glad I should be to gratify this innocent wish."

"What does Carrie say?" inquired Aunt Abby, who was housekeeper for the doctor. "I hope she is well."

"Very well," replied the other, "and expects to have an escort home next week."

"It would seem good to see her," was Aunt Abby's reply. "But, doctor, I have been thinking the house

would be a great deal pleasanter if you had a good wife to brighten it with a sunshiny face."

"I do not doubt it would," responded he, carelessly; "perhaps I shall have one some time."

"I don't see how you'll ever get time to get married, doctor, if you don't take it without asking."

"I shall find time when I find a suitable person to become my wife," said the doctor, gravely. "I feel the need of such a companion, and now I am abundantly able to support a wife in a style suitable to the taste of the most refined. I have sometimes regretted marrying as I did in early life, and making my Carrie's loved and gentle mother the sharer of my early trials. I expressed this feeling to her ere she left me. She bade me banish it, saying it had added to her comfort to be my companion, and the mother of my darling child."

A professional call here interrupted the conversation. The doctor went out to commence the business of the day, but one little sentence in Carrie's letter occupied much of his thoughts. He had seen Mr. Fielding only a day or two before, and had been invited by that gentleman to call at his house. He had engaged to do so at the time, without knowing that any one in whom he was particularly interested was an inmate there. He would endeavor to fulfil his engagement that very evening. He would call, if his stay must be limited to a few minutes. Thus deciding, he dismissed the subject for a time, and occupied his mind with the duties of his vocation during the day.

The ladies on Fifth Avenue were informed by their hostess that several guests were expected in the evening.

Mary felt indifferent at hearing this announcement, for Mr. Marshly had left the city; but Kate manifested much pleasure.

"*He* may possibly be among the rest," thought she.

The evening came. Many guests had arrived, and the hours were passing away without bringing any thing of much interest to Kate, when the door-bell rang, and Dr. Stonely was announced. Kate started involuntarily at hearing his name, and looked at him as he entered. He greeted the company in an easy, respectful manner, dignified yet unassuming, shaking hands with several with whom he was previously acquainted. He then glanced around the rooms, as if in search of some one he had not seen. He soon espied Kate, who was seated near Mary, and approached her immediately. She returned his greeting politely, and she was very glad to meet him again; but she was sadly embarrassed. She was conscious that the warm tide of life had risen and displayed itself in her cheeks, and she was not like herself. Her visible awkwardness nonplussed Dr. Stonely; and Mary, who saw and pitied them both, afterwards told Kate that they appeared more like two enemies during a truce, than friends who esteemed each other.

The doctor's call was shortened by a message that was brought from a patient. He must obey this call, and he bade Kate farewell with a constrained manner, and then, bowing to the company, hastily departed. Kate was relieved when the rest of the party followed his example, and immediately retired to her own apartment to find fault with herself for behaving so miserably, when she wished above all things to acquit herself well.

Mary innocently chid her for her coldness towards the doctor.

"I was not cold in my manner towards him. Why should I have been?"

"I don't know of any reason why you should have seemed so unlike yourself, but you certainly did," was the reply.

"Perhaps," said Kate, "if Mr. Fielding had not said what he has to me about him, I should not have felt confused, as I confess I did. This must have affected my manner somewhat, but I will try to do better if I have another opportunity. I am ashamed of myself."

Mary, perceiving that she was giving Kate pain, ceased her rallying, and bade her good-night. Kate then retired to rest; but it was long, very long, ere sleep spread its mantle over her wearied senses.

The next morning, at breakfast, she was obliged to pass through a trying ordeal, in being rallied and half-scolded for her indifference to such a gentleman as Mr. Fielding's friend, Dr. Stonely.

"I declare," said Mr. Fielding, "I shall begin to believe you invulnerable, if you see nothing in him to fancy."

"I think him a very noble specimen of humanity," replied Kate. "He is a perfect gentleman, and I liked what I heard of his conversation very much; but I must not be expected to go into rhapsodies about any gentleman, — that would not be proper."

"But you can treat one with a trifle less stiffness in your manner than you did my favorite," retorted the other.

Kate blushed crimson,— tears filled her eyes; and Mr. Fielding saw that he had gone too far.

"Pardon me, Kate," said he; "I did not intend to wound your feelings."

"I have nothing to forgive," said she, and wished she dared to add, "don't mention this person to me again;" but she would not venture such an exposure of her feelings.

After breakfast she sought the relief afforded by the solitude of her own chamber. She reviewed the scene of the past night. Her heart had beat more quickly when Dr. Stonely was presented. She had endeavored to conceal her emotion, and her actions had been misunderstood. Then Dr. Stonely had changed since she saw him before. He was then in straitened circumstances, now he was enjoying a prosperity that was the fruit of his own persevering efforts. Another had not placed him in the position he now occupied: his own merit, with the added blessing of Heaven, had done this.

These thoughts were present with Kate, when the doctor came forward to greet her. She would fain have greeted him with frankness, but she failed. He must have thought strange of her. Why should she appear so? It was only an act of courtesy for him to recognize her at all. He was a polite man, and she was a foolish creature!

So said Kate, mentally. She now felt inclined to avoid Dr. Stonely, quite as much as she had hitherto to meet him; concluding, hastily, that she must have disgusted him by her conduct. A short time after their first meetin Kate and the doctor met again accidentally, — some

would say *providentially*, they thought. This meeting was in a sick room. Kate had been attracted there by hearing that sympathy and kindness would be welcomed by the inmate, who languished on the couch of suffering, a stranger in a strange land.

Dr. Stonely was there to minister professionally to the sufferer's wants. A sense of the awkwardness of her manner, on meeting the doctor before, oppressed her mind at seeing him again; yet her feelings were soon diverted from herself by the state of the patient she had come to visit. This lady was gratified at receiving kindnesses from a stranger, upon whom, she said, she could have no claim. She had not expected it; and she wept tears of gratitude as she told Dr. Stonely of Kate's kindness, and called his attention to the little luxuries she had brought her.

Kate assured the woman that she had a claim upon the benevolence of Christians, that could not with impunity be slighted.

Dr. Stonely ventured the opinion that some were ever glad to acknowledge the claims of suffering humanity, and he thought the lady present belonged to this class. This he said with an appreciating glance at Kate. This confused her; yet she felt not the embarrassment she had endured on the previous interview with him. They parted, however, without understanding each other better than before on one point. Yet Kate had risen in the estimation of the doctor unconsciously.

He saw her as she was: there was no affectation in her manner, no efforts to please; and yet she did please. She was noncommittal, Dr. Stonely thought, in her manner

towards himself. He could not feel satisfied in regard to her estimation of himself, but he hoped he might not be disagreeable to her. He was exceedingly gratified at meeting her as he had done on her visit of mercy, and trusted an opportunity might in this way be afforded him to learn something of her feelings towards himself.

Kate, when reflecting upon the probability of seeing him again in the room of sickness, shrunk from incurring the risk. A consciousness of high regard for the gentleman made her fearful of betraying the sentiments she strove to hide.

"I don't know as I shall venture to this place again," said she to Mary Winthrop. "He shall not think that I put myself in his way."

"He will not think so; why should he?" replied Mary.

"But he is so distant!" was the rejoinder.

"And so are you, Kate, or so you were," said her friend. "I think that Dr. Stonely is a diffident man; and therefore he might feel much pleasure at meeting a person, and yet fail to manifest it."

"Perhaps it may be so," was Kate's abstracted reply.

She did not, however, absent herself from the sufferer. Mary accompanied her, and she went almost daily. Once or twice she came in contact with the doctor, yet they became no better acquainted.

Near the time when Kate expected to return to Rosefield, Carrie Stonely returned to her home. On the very next day after, she called upon Kate, who, as may be presumed, received her affectionately, and urged her to spend the following day with her. This invitation, being seconded by Mrs. Fielding, was gladly accepted.

Carrie went, and spent a long, pleasant day with Kate, who did every thing in her power to promote her pleasure.

"I do wish," said Carrie, as she sat upon the sofa beside her friend, her head resting upon Kate's shoulder, "that I could have your company at home. I need some one besides Aunt Abby, although she is very kind to me always; for she is not young, and has forgotten, I do believe, how young people feel."

"Your father will find some one, some time, to be a pleasant companion for you, I dare say, Carrie," was the embarrassed rejoinder.

Kate would willingly have changed the subject of discourse, but she could not; for Carrie, not suspecting her feelings, proceeded to ask Kate if she thought her father a disagreeable person.

"No, Carrie," said Kate, "I do not. I think him a very pleasant, gentlemanly man."

"I am glad to hear you say this," responded the other; "for I was afraid you did not like him."

"You love him very much, don't you, dear?" interrogated her friend.

"I do: he is one of the best fathers in all the world."

"I can easily believe it, Carrie, and am glad for you," was Kate's reply.

During the drive to the steamer, when the ladies were leaving New York, Kate again saw Dr. Stonely. He was riding in his chaise, and bowed politely to both ladies as he passed. Kate returned his salutation with one of her own natural smiles.

Mr. Fielding, who was in the carriage, congratulated Kate upon acquitting herself so well.

"I declare," said he, "I am tempted now to forgive all your previous neglect of my friend; for you have certainly given him a very encouraging smile this morning."

Kate smiled again, but did not reply.

We will pass over this journey home without description, as it was very much like other journeys. The reception that awaited them on their return was a matter of pleasure, as usual. The autumn months passed away in the enjoyment of home comforts of various kinds. December found them preparing for another excursion south. The friends in that warm region would not listen to a suggestion, made by Mrs. Felton, that the coming winter had better be spent by all her household at Rosefield.

His mother, Mr. Felton said, must go to a milder climate, for one more season at least. Kate must and should accompany her; and they must take Susan with them, and persuade Mary Winthrop to join their party once more. Good old Maggie was somewhat disappointed, when Mrs. Felton decided to go, but concluded that it might, on the whole, be the best thing for her to do. She was left, as usual, with the care of the house and premises. The house was never shut up. Maggie, with a younger female servant, and the hostler, occupied some of the rooms, and kept the whole house in order. She was always instructed to make herself and those with her as comfortable as possible, during the absence of the family. She was known to be perfectly trustworthy; and Mrs. Felton left her without anxiety in regard to her faithfulness. Her only fear was that the dear old soul might be too economical for her own comfort. The motto at Mrs. Felton's mansion had ever been, "Comfort enjoyed, and comfort diffused."

None under her roof were restrained in any thing short of waste. Mrs. Felton acted out the feeling that riches would be valueless to her and hers, if they could not enable her to contribute to the well-being of her fellow-creatures. The family bade Maggie and the other servant a hopeful good-bye. They performed the journey with much comfort to themselves. Mary Winthrop yielded very easily to their persuasions to go with them. And altogether they made as pleasant a party as ever travelled any portion of our world; and their safe arrival was welcomed at Groveton before the commencement of the Christmas holidays.

CHAPTER XVI.

"Earth has no sunnier clime than a love-lighted home."

The holidays soon sped away amid the genial atmosphere of Groveton. Presents were exchanged by the different members of the family. The servants were not excluded from this annual source of happiness. Many were the tokens of affectionate kindness they received from the family. Small sums of money, too, were given, to enable them to offer little gifts to each other.

After the festival-season had gone by, it was voted by all the household as pleasant a Christmas as they had ever enjoyed. Winter was never the season of greatest quiet on this plantation. The atmosphere invited to exertion. The pleasant sunshine was greatly enjoyed by our friends in the open air; and the milder beams of the moon often rested upon them, cheering their pathway, while promenading the many pleasant walks about the house. Pleasant excursions were made on horseback; pleasant drives were frequently enjoyed; social conversation enlivened nearly all the waking hours, and caused the time to fly apace; visits were made, and company entertained: but the sweetest moments known by the loving friends gathered at Groveton were those when, secluded from all the world besides, they interchanged offices and words of affection with each other.

It was a loving circle, — this cluster of hearts at Groveton. The influence they exerted upon their inferiors was

genial and most improving. None upon the premises were overlooked. The comfort and well-being of all were made a daily care by those who bore the responsibilities of this household.

Ruthy — dear good soul! — declared, that, if the people on every plantation could only be as happy as their folks were, it would be a matter of rejoicing. "Still," she added, "one ting dey would want, — dey want to be free." True, Ruthy; love of liberty is a natural instinct of nature with mankind. Let whatever may be done to crush it, this germ will never die. Like some other tough plants of earth, the more it is trampled upon the more it will flourish.

The slaves on Mr. Felton's plantation were as happy as any people in their condition. They loved their owner, for he was ever kind to them; yet those who were capable of reflection knew that a change might come to them suddenly, and they might become the property of a hard-natured, bad man. Such men are not uncommon in any part of the world; though the law, in some places, restrains from violence more than in others.

Mr. Felton's people were aware that other planters pursued a very different course with their slaves from that which he did; and of this they were only too often reminded. One morning, not long after the holidays closed, Ruthy entered the room where the ladies of the household were assembled, engaged in their usual morning employment. She looked disturbed.

"Missus," said she addressing Mrs. Felton, junior, "Sylvia's in de kitchen, an' she's a takin' on dreffully 'cause her darter Meeta is gwine ter be sell'd. I come

ter tell ye, ladies, 'cause I hoped ye'd comfort her a leetle."

"Ask her to come in here," said her mistress. "I should like to see her."

Sylvia was accordingly introduced to all the ladies together. She was a good, respectable looking mulatto woman. She came with diffidence into the presence of so many ladies, to speak of herself; for she was not in the habit of doing so. Now, all the mother was alive in her heart, and she gave vent to her distress in an agony of tears.

"O dear Missus!" she cried, "I don'no what ter do. Massa's gwine ter sell Meeta. I heered him a talkin' to a driver 'bout it; and, cause he said 'twould make a fuss, he tell'd the driver ter keep still, an' not let the people know 'bout it. He said he'd send me off ter another plantation, so as not ter have a scene; for he know'd I make a fuss, cause I'se got no children but Meeta now. Ter-morrow I'se gwine ter be sent off, yer see."

"How came you to hear what was said?"

"I'se standing in de closet, next ter the dinin' room, ye see, an' they went into the room, and set down ter talk. So I jist heered massa say, 'Meeta's a fine gal, an' she's worth eight or nine hundred dollars, an' I must have it.' I couldn't move arter that, yer see; so I stood still, and heered the man 'gree ter give eight hundred cash for me last chile. He said how he wanted her for the New Orleans market. Ye knows as well as me what 'tis for a young gal ter be selled to go thar. Oh dear! oh dear! I would ruther she'd die dis 'ere blessed minnit. De good Lord knows I would."

The woman paused to take breath. Kate bade her be calm, saying, —

"We will not allow your daughter to be sold, if we can possibly help it."

"Perhaps it will be well to go immediately over, and see Sylvia's owner at once," said Kate. "I will save her from this fate, if money can do it."

"It does not seem right to pay a person to keep them from doing wrong," said Mary Winthrop.

"It is right," said Kate, "when a great amount of good is to be accomplished, or misery prevented, by so doing."

The young ladies concluded to take a drive to their neighbor's plantation. They all went together in a covered carriage. Emma wished to hear whatever might be said by Kate, and the gentleman with whom she was desirous of making some friendly contract in regard to Meeta and her poor mother; Mary Winthrop went for the ride; and Kate took Susan with her in order to show her more of the world and its doings than she had previously seen. The weather was pleasant; and, had the little party felt sure that their errand would have been successful, the ride would have been greatly enjoyed. They hoped, yet doubted; and doubt always prevents enjoyment by bringing some perplexity in its train. Susan felt greatly interested in the welfare of the girl. She had not forgotton her own horror at the thought of going with that same trader; and she longed to have Meeta saved, as she had been, from his power.

Mr. Blackson, Meeta's master, met the ladies on the veranda of his house, and, after greeting them with much politeness, invited them into his parlor. He then hastened

to send a servant to announce the arrival of visitors to his lady.

"Mr. Blackson, stay a few minutes," said Kate. "I wish to see you on some business of importance."

"I will be back in a moment," he replied; and so he was. He seated himself in readiness for Kate's commands.

"Have you a young mulatto girl you would part with?" she asked.

"I have one," replied he; "but there is a trader here that wants to buy her. I have not agreed to his price, if I can get more than he will pay for her."

"What will he give?"

"Eight hundred dollars is the most he will give for her," was the rejoinder.

"I know of friends who will give more for her than that," answered Kate.

"Well, I'm not bound to let this trader have her. If I can get fifty dollars more from some one else, this bargain with him is nothing."

"I am glad," said Kate; "for I am authorized to pay you the other fifty, and take the girl under my care. Shall we close the bargain at once?"

"Why, yes, we may as well, if you can pay the cash down."

It may be necessary to say that Mary Winthrop and Mrs. John Felton contributed towards the purchase of Meeta; and both put a handsome sum into Kate's hand at the same time that her mother gave a portion. Kate supplied the remainder. She had not expected her friends to unite with her in this act of humanity, but was glad

they had done so; for she trusted that now she should be able to free Sylvia also.

When the trader found that a larger sum had been offered for Meeta, and a different bargain had been made, he was disappointed, and not a little angry at the disappointment. When he learned that the purchaser was a New England lady, his rage increased greatly. Its demonstrations knew no bounds.

"It is just like these northern hypocrites," he said, "to take advantage of a fellow in that way. There ain't one on 'em but what likes to have slaves as well as I do, this minnit. I'll swear to it she'd be willing to sell the gal today, if she could git fifty more'n she give for her, cuss her! I'm a mind to try her. I will do it, I swar I will."

Kate paid the sum demanded for Meeta, and, after having all matters connected with the business legally adjusted, took her home. Sylvia's mind was now at rest. She felt, that, if her daughter should be carried home by Kate, she would be treated kindly; and it would be a comfort to her to know this, even if she should not see her again. Kate did not tell any one that she was devising a plan to keep the mother and daughter together, or near each other.

Meeta was received at the plantation with great pleasure. The slaves demonstrated their joy loudly, as is their wont, when they can act without restraint. They were as loud in their praises of the ladies as they were in their congratulations to Meeta on her rescue from a fate rightly deemed horrible by these bondmen. Old Ruthy was wellnigh overjoyed at being told that Meeta could stay for a while in her cabin.

"'Pears like Missus Kate be half a angel," said she. "Next ting, she'll go ter buyin' Sylvy, I reckon."

"I hope she'll do it, if she can," responded Lucy. "I want 'em ter be togedder, like as we be."

The trader did not wish to purchase the mother of Sylvia. She would not pay as well, he said, as these young ones do. In pursuance of his resolution, he called at Mr. Felton's plantation, and asked to see Kate, who favored him with her presence. He very unceremoniously introduced his business by saying, —

"I 'spose ye wouldn't mind parting with this gal ye bought of Mr. Blackson, if I'd give ye nine hundred for her, would ye?"

"I will not sell her at any price," was Kate's decided rejoinder. "Others united with me in purchasing this girl, to save her from being taken to a market for the worst of purposes, as such young girls often are. We did not buy her in order to procure her services as a servant. She will be taken to the North, with the party that will return home thither, in the spring; and then her freedom will be given her."

The trader stared at Kate wonderingly during this speech.

"Then ye wouldn't take a thousand for her, I suppose?"

"No, certainly not; and, my friend, I advise you to abandon this inhuman business yourself. Be assured, it would make you a better and a happier man to do so."

"Must do somethin' for a livin', ye see," replied the man. "If ye think its inhuman for me to buy the niggers to sell again, you mustn't blame me more'n ye do

them that sells 'em to me. I buy slaves of pretty tall Christians, sometimes, and I sells 'em agin to the same kind er folks. I tell ye, Miss Felton, there's no sense in callin' my business inhuman, when you good folks let me git a livin', and more too, by it."

"I do not blame you more than others; I will not denounce any one. I do not believe in calling people by hard names. It is unkind; and, judging by the effect of unkindness upon myself, I think it has a tendency to make people reckless. I call the sundering of domestic ties, however, inhuman; without feeling aught but pity towards those who practise it."

"Wal, I don't know how you make anything by buying niggers, as you say, to save 'em from bein' sold."

"I don't expect to make anything, sir, neither do I wish to. It would be a matter of joy to me to be able to rescue every slave from bondage."

"Do ye think they'd be better on't than they be now?" asked the trader.

"In one and a most important sense they would be," was the reply. "Their owners, too, would be benefitted by employing free persons to do their work instead of slaves; and the colored people are entitled to the help of a Christian country in enabling them to become a nation by themselves. This should be done by our government. When a whole country is involved in a wrong, as is ours, it is its duty to manifest practical repentance, and evince this to a world by its acts."

"I don't believe ye'll git red of slavery yit awhile in this country, and a body'd as well do as the rest do."

To this rejoinder of the man, Kate mildly replied, —

"For your own sake, my friend, I hope you will change your business. The conduct of others will be no excuse for you in the day of final account; each one must then answer for himself."

"Ye don't belong hereabouts, I heered," said the trader.

"No, my home is in New England," was Kate's reply.

"Shall ye leave the gal ye bought here when ye go home agin?" questioned the man.

"I expect she will go with me," answered Kate. "I said so."

"I forgot ye did. She'll be free, I spose."

"Certainly: if she is able to earn her living in slavery, she will be better able to do so as a free woman. She will, like all the rest of mankind, need friends and sympathy; and, with these cheering influences to help her, she will take care of herself."

"Wal, I wanted the gal, and was stark mad at you for buying her; but I bleve you mean to do the right thing arter all. But there is one thing I can tell you," continued the trader, "and that is, ye are not much in the fashion of the day. Folks don't ginerally trouble themselves to help other folks out of trouble, sartain not in these 'ere parts."

"I believe you are mistaken," responded Kate, "in supposing I am almost alone in feeling as I do in regard to slavery. There are a goodly company even here at the South who agree with me in sentiment, and would gladly free their people if they felt free to act without restraint. In my opinion there is much opposition to slavery *felt* at the South, if not expressed."

"Well," said this specimen of what a man may be-

come, — this trader in the image of his maker, the most degrading of vocations, — "it's no use to talk. I've lost a good bargain; but I must try again, for a feller must live any how."

When he arose to depart, Kate begged him to do unto others as he wished others to do unto him.

"Can't stop to think about that part of a consarn now," said the trader; "but I don't intend to follow this business much longer, and I'm 'bleeged to ye for yer advice." He then departed, and was not again heard of at the Felton plantation until two years afterwards, when news came that himself, with quite a number of slaves whom he was driving to a remote southern market, had fallen victims to the cholera, and had gone to another world.

He did not, as he had promised, continue in that awfully responsible business "much longer," yet all too long for himself, and those hapless ones whose destinies he had been in a measure the means of shaping for weal or woe.

Some remarks reached the ears of the Feltons that were made at leisure by some of their neighbors, upon the ultraism of this act of anti-slaveryism, as the purchase of Meeta was termed. Little fault, however, was found by the better part of their acquaintance, who were content that these good friends should be a little odd. It was very evident that the Feltons cherished a feeling of affectionate kindness for all; and, although they regretted the low standard upon which many acted, they did not resort to cruel invective as a means to convince them of error. It never ruffled the feelings of any member of the house-

hold at the plantation of Mr. Felton to know that they were termed ultra. They obtained their ultraism from a very ultra book called the "Bible," and they were willing to patiently labor and wait for a change of sentiment in regard to their standard. They did not doubt but such a change would come, since God, who cannot falsify, has encouraged his people to hope for it.

At the early approach of weather that permitted the safe return of Mrs. Felton to the North, the party who had increased the cheerfulness and social influence for good of this southern home bade their friends adieu, without an unconditional promise of spending the next cold season with them. They were urged with loving earnestness to return again the next season, but they felt that duty might keep them at home.

CHAPTER XVII.

"Life hath a load
Which must be carried on, and safely may;
Yet keep those cares without thee: let the heart
Be God's alone, and choose the better part.' *Vaughn.*

MAGGIE, after welcoming the family in her wonted manner, with strongly expressed affection, ventured to ask if they were going to stop at home after that time. Mrs. Felton replied that she expected they should remain there, except during short intervals, which they contemplated spending in travelling and making short visits at different places. "But why do you ask?" inquired that lady.

"Because I think you are needed here," said Maggie. "It made my heart ache to see so many poor creatures here last winter, that needed you to do for them. I did all I could for all that I knew as ye would have helped, if you had been to home; but I couldn't begin to say and do as you do."

"We will try and do all you wish us to, now, Maggie," remarked Kate.

This pledge was fulfilled; and very many little rills of comfort flowed from the cherished home at Rosefield into the more humble dwellings of those whose circumstanccs were less prosperous than those of many around them. 'Twas ever thus, at this abode of Christian benevolence, where the whole family of man were termed neighbors by the inmates.

This spring was likely to prove an exciting season to Mary Winthrop. She had received letters from Mr.

Marshly containing intelligence of importance to herself. He expected to get things in a condition favorable to her taking up her residence in his new home early the next autumn. She would then see him at Rosefield, prepared to take her, in company with the friends who had promised to accompany them, to his western garden, as he termed his new home.

Kate assisted Mary's preparations for her expected nuptials, which, it was understood, were to be celebrated soon after the arrival of Mr. Marshly at Rosefield. It was painful, on some accounts, for her to think of parting with this friend of her childhood. Still she did not regret that Mary was to reside in a new country, where she might exert a great influence for good, as she felt confident she would; for Kate had a large heart, as we have before given the reader to understand. She embraced a world in her benevolent affections.

All the friends at Rosefield looked forward to this contemplated tour with pleasure; but not one of the party anticipated it with so much delight as did Susan. She felt a lively interest in the well-being of her father's family; and it was now a long time since they had left Virginia, during which interval they had not been heard from. It was not expected that any of them would write themselves, but they might possibly have employed an amanuensis, or sent a verbal message by some person who was travelling in the direction of their former home, who might trouble themselves to forward it to Groveton.

A trip to New York was considered necessary in order to procure the articles necessary to be used in making up the *trousseau* for the wedding. Kate, Mary, and Susan

made a pleasant little travelling party on this occasion. Susan was now old enough to be brought forward in society; and her adopted sister improved every opportunity for introducing her to those circles in which it would be safe for her to mingle, and where, too, she might be benefitted. The journey to the city was unmarked, save by one little incident.

Kate and her young friend Carrie met, as they had done on a previous occasion, in the cars in which they rode to Albany. Carrie was introduced to Susan. Mary she recognized with animated pleasure, as well as Kate; and her delight was unbounded at learning that they were going to New York.

"I am so very glad of your company," she said, "that I am half beside myself."

"Have you no one with you to protect you on your way home?" asked Kate.

"To be sure I have," replied Carrie, with a roguish smile, which she hid from all but the party that immediately surrounded her. Then, in a whisper, she added, —

"That sober, steadfast-looking gentleman yonder," inclining her head, at the moment, towards another part of the car, "has engaged to see me in safety to my father's. He can protect me, but he is intolerably dull. I am glad I have met you, for now he may be relieved from a duty that seems any thing but pleasant to him."

"Do you suppose it is ever irksome to a gentleman to do the needful for a lady who needs his care?" asked Mary, laughing.

"I am obliged to believe it is, to some gentlemen," was Carrie's rejoinder. "Now this gentleman did not like to

say no, when a friend of mine begged the favor of his gallant attentions for my little self on this trip; but you'll see that he will be glad enough to get rid of the annoyance as soon as he finds that he can safely transfer the responsibility he has assumed."

"Her friends were amused at these remarks, and at her playfulness of manner; but did not think then that she had a right idea of the matter. As time passed, however, they were led to think that Carrie was forgotton by her gallant. He became absorbed in a political controversy, and appeared to have neither eyes nor ears for any thing else.

"Didn't I tell you," said Carrie, "that he would be glad to get rid of me? Think of his not speaking to me but once since he started! I wish I knew whether he had forgotten me. But I don't intend to remind him of my whereabouts, or even of my existence."

She enlivened the party by her playful sallies until they reached Albany; when her merriment became unbounded at seeing her nominal travelling protector leave the car, and take a seat in a carriage, which was driven away.

"It is well," said she, "that I have a check for my baggage in my pocket. He has not carried that off in his absentmindedness. But what a capital joke, to be left so unceremoniously, and so quietly too! I declare I am much obliged to his honor for not taking a formal leave of me. He is so prosy that I could hardly endure such a farce."

Kate felt that she must not take her party to that friend's house where she usually stopped, when in the city, but went immediately to a hotel, where they spent the night. When they went on board the steamer, on the following morning, Carrie looked for her deserting protector. She

espied him in a remote part of the boat, and pointed him out to her friends.

"I wonder if he will think of me to-day," said she.

"Do you hope he will remember you?" asked Susan.

"I can't say," was the reply. "It will be funny if he does, and funny if he does not. I don't know which would be the most comical of the two dilemmas."

"I hope he will remember you, Carrie," remarked Kate. "It would be almost a disgrace to humanity, if a gentleman should forget a lady altogether."

"I should not care for the odium cast upon human nature," said Carrie. "It would be so ludicrous to have him forget me until he arrived in New York."

"He is thinking of you this minute," remarked Mary Winthrop. "See! he is looking anxiously for some object."

Carrie, after hastily glancing at him, turned her head abruptly away.

"I never can look at him, for I shall laugh outright in his face," said she. "I wish I could feel vexed with him; and I've been trying to, but my muscles keep relaxing at such a rate it is no use to try."

Kate had hard work to control her own risibility, as the gentleman who had been the subject of remark approached Carrie with a perturbed expression of countenance. She would not perceive his proximity, until she was obliged to by hearing herself addressed by him.

"Miss Stonely," said he, "I regret my carelessness in leaving you in the car last night. I owe you an apology."

"Don't trouble yourself to apologize, Mr. Peterson,"

replied Carrie, struggling to command her mirthfulness. "I have been well cared for since I last spoke with you."

"I became so much interested in discussing a political point with a gentleman, that I did not think that I had any one under my care, until after I had retired to rest last night. Then I remembered my neglect: my confusion, as you may suppose, was considerable. I did not then," he continued, "know what to do. It was late to seek you, even if I had known where to go, but I did not."

"You have found me in pleasant circumstances this morning," said Carrie, hardly able to restrain her merriment.

She presented the gentleman to her friends, who, she informed him, were going to New York. It was with great difficulty that she went through this ceremony at all, and did not in a manner to satisfy herself. She wished for an opportunity to laugh heartily.

Mr. Peterson's awkwardness increased her embarrassment at length to such a degree that she could no longer repress her feelings, but laughed out, in spite of herself, until tears ran down her cheeks.

Mr. Peterson was a little confused on perceiving that he was an object of merriment to Carrie, yet he was not angry, but joined in her laugh; and the contagion, which had until that moment been concealed among the party, now was made visible, and they altogether enjoyed a season of innocent mirth at the expense of the poor gentleman's short memory.

Kate attempted to apologize for what he might term their rudeness; but he gallantly told her that he was glad

at this time to be laughed at, for he felt that he merited something more unpleasant than that at the hands of Carrie and her friends.

"I would not have laughed, if I could have helped it, Mr. Peterson," said Carrie; "but you don't know how very ludicrous it seemed to me yesterday to see you leaving the car without even looking at poor me."

"Why didn't you speak to me?" asked the gentleman.

"Because I had company; besides, it would have spoiled the fun. I wanted to see how long you would forget me," replied she, laughing again at the thought of what had presented itself to her mind.

"What will your father say, Carrie?" inquired Mr. Peterson.

"Oh! he will only laugh at it, I know," answered she; "how can he do otherwise at any thing so amusing? besides, you know, he believes it is healthful to laugh."

The gentleman, after expressing his pleasure at knowing that his neglected charge had fallen into such good company, and that his carelessness had been so readily forgiven, soon sought society congenial to his political taste, leaving Carrie again under the care of her lady friends during the remainder of the trip.

"Didn't I tell you," exclaimed Carrie, mirthfully, "that this gallant gentleman would be glad to get rid of me?" as, just after they anchored at the pier in New York, she saw Mr. Peterson, carpet-bag in hand, waiting for the crowd to disperse, so that he might step on shore. "He has not forgotten me this time: he has transferred his trust."

"Make him see you, if you can," said Mary Winthrop, "and ask him to procure you a carriage."

"*Us*, you mean," answered Carrie. "If I can, I mean to ask for just a carriage of him. He is such a gallant soul, it is a pity he should want an opportunity of displaying his gallantry."

Such an opportunity did not occur. At least Carrie failed in her attempts to attract the attention of Mr. Peterson. It was no annoyance to the ladies to be left with Carrie to care for; but it was comical to see this development of selfishness in a man and a father. The friends took seats together in one of the many carriages offered them by their drivers. They were not expected in the city at this time; consequently, no one had met them on the steamer.

"My father," said Carrie, "will be greatly amused, when I relate my adventure to him. I do wish you all could go home with me; but you, Miss Felton, most of all."

"I thank you," Kate responded, slightly confused at the avowed partiality shown by Carrie. None noticed her confusion but Mary, who believed she understood its meaning, although she seemed not to observe it.

"You must come to Fifth Avenue and see us all," said Kate to Carrie. "I shall be happy to see you, and I know these other friends will too. I am very glad we have had your company during our journey, and hope we shall always be friends."

"If we are not always friends it will be your fault, Miss Felton," remarked Carrie, in a grave tone, just as the carriage stopped before the door of her father's dwelling.

Kate had no opportunity of replying to these remarks, as Carrie parted from her with only a pleasant good-by.

Aunt Abby welcomed Carrie at the door, saying that her father was absent.

"That is nothing strange," said she, as she smilingly nodded a second adieu to her friends in the carriage, which was soon driven to Mr. Fielding's, where a hearty welcome was given to the party it transported thither.

This visit was an unexpected one; nevertheless, it was highly acceptable. These city friends had become acquainted with Susan while visiting at Rosefield, and expressed great pleasure at meeting her again. They were ignorant of the exact circumstances of her birth, but had an idea that she was in a measure dependent upon Mrs. Felton for support. This, however, did not exclude her from their circle; they felt that her presence was an ornament for which they were thankful.

Mrs. Fielding's taste was consulted in regard to the many purchases made by Mary and Kate, and her company was courted upon their shopping expeditions, which were frequent during their limited stay in the city. Ten days, at the longest, were all they could devote at that time, to business and pleasure, ere they must leave New York. Kate and Mary went out nearly every day. Susan generally accompanied them, — learning much, by her quick perception, of the whys and wherefores of the many objects presented to her view.

Carrie Stonely visited Mrs. Fielding's, where she had become well acquainted; but, as usual, attached herself to Kate very closely, and often went out with the ladies. Once or twice Kate saw Dr. Stonely in the street. Once he had just emerged from a narrow court, where he had been visiting a patient. The ladies were passing the

avenue at the moment. The doctor seemed gratified at meeting them all, but Mary declared that there was a something in his manner of shaking hands with Kate, that seemed to say he was not indifferent towards her. She told Kate so, who replied, —

"I hope he is not;" but this was said in such a playful manner, that her friend did not imagine how much her feelings were expressed by it. Carrie was with them at the time. Mr. Peterson's forgetfulness was alluded to rather humorously, by the doctor, who expressed his gratitude and pleasure at the thought of his daughter's agreeable journey; and all the party joined in being amused at the incidents that had attended it.

After they parted from her father, Carrie told her friends that the patient he visited in that humble neighborhood was an object of great solicitude to him. Her case, he had told Carrie, was critical, and her sufferings aggravated by her discontent. "From the lady's surroundings, he judged she was poor now, but had seen better days. Father says," continued Carrie, "that he has been puzzling his brain ever since he first saw her, to call to mind the circumstances under which he has seen her before; for he is sure he has seen her somewhere. Her pride is a great obstacle in the way of her recovery to health, father says; and sometimes he is tempted to wish she had been placed under the charge of some other physician."

"Has your father ever mentioned her name to you, Carrie?" asked Kate.

"No: he does not often mention the names of his patients, but merely speaks of cases among them."

"I would contrive some way to obtain an interview

with this daughter of sorrow, if I were to remain long in the city," remarked Kate. "Perhaps," she added, "it is my duty: at any rate, will you go with me, Carrie? As you are her physician's daughter, she may admit you more readily than any one else."

"I don't know about that," responded Carrie; "yet I am willing to go with you, if you wish to call, at any time when you can go."

"Suppose we make an effort to go to-day, after we accomplish what we have to attend to on Broadway," said Kate. "We must contrive to go in such a way that her pride shall not be wounded by the call, else we may do her an injury instead of a kindness."

"Suppose," said Carrie, "we take some nice fruit along with us. Father says that is grateful to her, and good for her besides."

Kate agreed to this proposition, and, as soon as Mary could dispense with her services or advice, turned her steps, in company with Carrie, to Smith's Court, while Mary went home with Mrs. Fielding and Susan. On their way, Kate and Carrie purchased some very nice dried fruit, also some oranges and lemons, — the last mentioned being ever grateful to the sick. Kate hoped that this would secure them a passport to the peevish invalid. She felt some trepidation when she knocked gently at the door of No. 22 Smith's Court.

A pretty little girl admitted the ladies into a small room, adjoining which was a bedroom. Here they seated themselves, after Carrie announced herself, at Kate's suggestion, as Dr. Stonely's daughter, accompanied by a friend. This announcement succeeded, as Kate had hoped, in procuring

the desired interview. The sufferer felt a regard for her physician, as even the most ungrateful are ever inclined to do; for he had been patient and kind towards her, during many weeks of fretfulness and complaint. Carrie was introduced by Kate, who was for the time her nameless friend; for Kate had caught a glimpse of the sick lady, before she entered her bedroom, that influenced her to keep back her own name.

This she told Carrie in a whisper, who was governed by the suggestion. The invalid received both Carrie and Kate with an air of haughty politeness, that almost convinced the latter that it was Mrs. Upton who was addressing her. "Yet could it be possible?" she mentally asked, and was willing to persuade herself that she was mistaken. Still, the resemblance was so striking, she could not keep the image of Mrs. Upton from her mind.

The little offering of fruit was received with a dignified "thank you," which seemed stereotyped. There was wanting that lighting-up of the countenance so expressive of grateful feeling, when accepting a favor. The lady was made to understand that Kate was only a visitor in New York. This intelligence was received by her with an involuntary smile, which was noticed by both Kate and Carrie. The latter was invited to repeat her call, the former was wished a pleasant journey home, by the invalid, who turned her head uneasily upon the pillow, as the ladies approached her bed to take leave of her. The leave-taking was as abrupt as it well could be; and Kate turned from this couch of languishing with a heart yearning to do something to soften the woes of this suffering sister.

"Would I could do something for this proud woman!"

said she, as soon as she had reached the street. "I would give her my sympathy, but she repels it. I pity her; and, if I stop in this city next fall, on returning from the West, I will know more about her, if possible."

Kate did not return to Mrs. Fielding's that afternoon until the hour for dinner had arrived. She was interrogated by her host as to the cause of her unusual absence, and rallied not a little upon playing truant.

"Did you see Dr. Stonely in your wanderings, Kate?" asked Mr. Fielding.

"Certainly," was the quick rejoinder, "and his daughter too."

"Did you meet the doctor again after we parted?" asked Mary.

"I did not," was Kate's reply. "Carrie and I went as soon as we could to Smith's Court, and called upon the invalid he spoke of."

"How were you received?" inquired Susan, who had heard what Carrie had said about the woman before parting with Mary and herself.

"Not as well as I had hoped. Carrie was treated with less distrust than myself; still she was not warmly welcomed, notwithstanding she is the daughter of the lady's physician. She reminds me strongly of Mrs. Upton, of whom you, Mary, have heard me speak."

"Mrs. Upton!" said Mrs. Fielding, with emphasis. "Is it possible it can be her?"

"It may be," answered her husband. "Since her husband's death, little has been heard of her, or known by her former acquaintances. She has experienced a great reverse of fortune, and now hides herself from the world."

"Then it is her I saw to-day. She must have recognized me," said Kate, "and that perhaps caused her reserve towards me."

"Yours was not a pleasant visit, then?" said Mary.

"Not exactly," answered Kate. "Yet I do not regret having made it; and if I visit this city, as I expect to do, next autumn, I will try and see if it is not in my power to benefit this poor woman. I don't love to think that she is Mrs. Upton; still she resembles her in looks and manner."

"Did you ask Carrie to inquire the name of this person of her father?" asked Mr. Fielding.

Kate replied that she had, and, more, had striven to enable Carrie to remember and make the request; yet she was not confident she would do so, because she saw so little of her father, and had her attention so much occupied by other objects. It proved that Kate had judged rightly; for she was obliged to leave the city without learning the name she was so much interested to know.

The business that called Kate and Mary to New York was completed, and they performed their journey homeward in less than a fortnight from the time of their leaving home. It was a matter of regret to Kate that she had not been able to see more of Dr. Stonely; still no one suspected her of harboring such feelings. The doctor had made a short call at the house of her host while Kate was in the city, but she was away at the time. *He* had been told of her contemplated journey in September, and of her intention to visit New York again on her return. Could Kate but have known the pleasure this last little item of intelligence afforded him, her heart would have been

lightened, and her self-love flattered not a little. She did not, however, suspect that she was regarded with special interest by the only gentleman whose approbation she had ever felt solicitous to gain; and she went on trying to school her heart, as had long been her habit, into an indifference it was impossible for her to feel.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"If any strength we have, it is but ill;
But all the good is God's, both power and will." *Fairy Queen.*

VERY early in the month of September, Mr. Marshly arrived at Rosefield to claim Mary as his bride. The wedding was a pleasant, social affair, rather than a pompous festival. The bride chose to have as little parade as possible upon the occasion, and her friends were willing she should be indulged in this innocent wish. She was married in a church, so that every one who had a desire to witness the ceremony might be gratified. She afterwards received calls at her home during several hours.

On the following morning, a wedding party, consisting of the bride and bridegroom, Mrs. Felton, Kate, and Susan, started on their tour to the fertile regions of the West. They did not, however, go directly to the future home of the bride, but visited Niagara, and delighted themselves with a view of its soul-inspiring beauty and grandeur. Most of the party had beheld this masterpiece of nature's efforts before. To Susan it was a novelty, of which she had not formed the faintest idea. The half had not been told her, she said, and was answered that it was impossible to convey to the mind of any one who had not seen it a just conception of the sublime reality. Language had ever proved inadequate, and the attempts of artistic skill to portray upon canvass the stupendous, soul-moving exhibition of the power of Him who created it have been but feeble.

It was with reluctance that our party left the place. They would fain have lingered, and espied each day something new to enrapture the eye in this majestic and mighty fall of water. Other places, however, must be visited, and they passed on. Other scenes were enjoyed, and that right heartily, by these lovers of nature's pencillings.

At a season of the year when so much presents itself to the traveller in that part of the country through which our friends were passing, they could not fail of making a pleasant tour. Sympathy on social converse, aside from outward objects, would have banished dullness; and these, added to the beauties of nature, to captivate the sense of sight, made the hours move as if impelled by magic wings. One richly laden field was scarcely passed ere another presented itself. Orchards, whose trees were burdened with the choicest fruit, ornamented the road on either side at short distances from each other; suggesting thoughts of the care of our benevolent Father for his ungrateful children. As they proceeded westward, and the programme continued to unfold, its loveliness increased. Long stretches of prairie delighted them by its beauty of modesty and gorgeousness, blended in the color of its flowers; while the luxuriant growth of grass and clover, which was visible even at this late season of the year, added charms to the splendor of a landscape which made it well-nigh entrancing to a cultivated taste.

As the party neared the new home of Mr. Marshly, they were obliged to exchange the neat and rapidly rolling vehicles of the railway for private carriages. This afforded them an opportunity of taking a leisurely view of things, which was greatly enjoyed, notwithstanding the

newness of the roads and the many little adventures interesting only to an emigrant.

Mr. Marshly watched anxiously to perceive the effect produced upon Mary's spirits by the sight of the many things that were new to her. She was beholding for the first time some of the roughnesses attendant upon emigration. He wondered if she would be surprised, but was happy to find that she was regarding each object they met with quite a home feeling. She had resolved against indulging homesickness before leaving her own home, and she was now strongly fortifying each avenue to its approach.

Susan scrutinized every face she saw where there was the least prospect of discovering a resemblance to either of the members of her own family. It was possible, Mr. Marshly told her, that Mr. Wilkins might be in that region, although he had never seen him. There were settlements not far distant that he had not visited, and it would be natural for Mr. Wilkins to seclude himself at his own clearing so as not to be much known.

Mr. Marshly's place, however, was reached by the party without their having been able to learn any thing of Susan's relatives; but Kate was hopeful in regard to finding them, and this feeling was shared by her adopted sister.

Aunt Pattie was upon the premises, prepared to give an affectionate welcome to this anxiously looked for bridal company. She had seen the carriages approaching the house; and, being confident that they were bringing her friends, she ran out to meet them, and hastened her steps towards them, as if by so doing she could accelerate the speed of their tired horses.

Mary regarded the figure of Aunt Pattie, as she approached, with pleasant interest. The frank, good-natured, comfort-loving expression of this woman's countenance was cheering to an uninterested beholder ; but to one who, like Mary, was to be warmed by its sunshine, it was charming. The welcome of the bride and her friends was more than flattering ; it betokened future happiness for Mary.

Aunt Pattie retraced her steps to the house by the side of the carriage, congratulating her friends upon their safe arrival, and assuring them of her joy at beholding them.

" The sight of you is as good as a cordial," said the good woman.

The party needed no further proof of the correctness of this statement than was given them in the exuberance of the spirits she manifested. The hands on the farm sympathized with Aunt Pattie in her joy. They loudly and heartily welcomed back their employer and friend. Every thing had gone on well under the supervision of Aunt Pattie.

" We have got along nicely," said she. " I do believe love is the strongest motive that can influence mortals : here these people have been without dread of punishment of any kind if they failed in duty to their employer in his absence, and yet they have been anxious to do every thing they thought would please him. ' Won't Mr. Marshly be glad to know we've done this or that ? ' has been constantly greeting my ears since you left, Charles ; and I believe twice the work has been done by the servants that would have been done by them in the character of slaves."

"I do not doubt it at all," was Mr. Marshly's reply. "The men seem very different: they are perfectly respectful towards me; and their 'I will, sir,' sounds much more becoming to men born under a free government, than the 'Yes, massa,' of former days."

Mary gave her husband an approving smile as she listened to this Christian sentiment as it fell from his lips.

"Then you believe freemen are more manly than bondmen, — at least that they feel so?" remarked she.

"Indeed I do; and every day's experience confirms me in the belief that I have done my duty in emancipating my slaves. I wish slavery was unknown in this country. I hope its withering influence may never paralyze the growing greatness of this region, as it has done that of other sections of our land. I would doom it to a natural death in its own borders, and will vote against its growth or extension whenever I can do so."

Aunt Pattie endorsed these opinions of her nephew. She had thought, in years gone by, that the negroes would suffer if freed, because they had been in the habit of looking to their owners for the supply of their wants; but she had found herself mistaken, at least as far as her nephew's slaves were concerned. They were quite as comfortable, she was sure, now that they were free men and women, as they had ever been before, and even more so. They appeared happy, and labored better than they had previously done. She expressed her sentiments with great warmth, and was gratified to learn that Mary preferred free labor to any other.

"We shall make a happy little family here in the wilderness, I doubt not," said Aunt Pattie, with much

ardor of feeling, ere the friends had been in the house fifteen minutes.

Her loquacity had gained strength by having had no motive to call it forth for some time previous, and its accumulated power was now exerted to confuse her guests. It was late in the afternoon of a lovely September day, when our bridal party arrived at the new home in "Fairy Dell," as the ladies termed the beautiful place Mr. Marshly had selected for the abode of all most dear to him.

"That shall be the name of this place," said that gentleman; "for it is applicable to it in a very sweet sense of the term, to myself. You, Mary, can understand this, if it is a puzzle to the rest of the company," he said, with a significant glance at his wife.

A deep blush suffused Mary's face, while she replied, that she should have to look out for the fairy influence around that place, and see that it was good.

There was the germ of much that was beautiful at Fairy Dell. Every thing, excepting the grass and some noble specimens of woodland growth, was new; yet all around gave fair promise of increasing and enduring beauty. The house was a spacious dwelling, two stories in height, and it boasted facilities for comfort that few houses in that region could at that time. Its rooms were large, handsomely furnished, and well ventilated. The back parlor, library, and conservatory were situated upon the south side of the house; while the front parlor, sitting and dining room fronted the west. A piazza extended around the body of the building, over which the work of braiding beautiful vines had been commenced. Sweetbrier lent its odor to regale the senses, near the beautiful trumpet-flower

that was ambitiously climbing to display its blossoms to the admiring gaze of all who passed that way. One sturdy oak stood on the green in front of the house, proudly looking down upon its younger forest brethren, extending its gigantic arms as if to shelter them from danger. A neat white fence inclosed a beautiful park in front of the house, with which Mary was delighted.

"We shall have room to breathe here," said she, "and to run about at our leisure; it will be pleasant, and I shal not often be lonely, if at all."

She arranged her own private apartments tastefully, and, having put each article of her dress in its proper place, declared that she felt very much at home in her new residence, an assurance that gave Aunt Pattie great satisfaction.

Mary, being established as mistress of Fairy Dell, devoted herself to the comfort of her friends, whose stay must of necessity be short. They made many little excursions around the country. Sometimes the party occupied one large carriage on a drive; at others Kate, Susan, and Mr. Marshly would ride on horseback, while Mrs. Felton and Mary rode in an easy carriage drawn by two horses, which was driven by a careful servant.

One morning near the middle of September, the little party went forth in the manner last mentioned, and turned in a direction new to them, as they quitted Fairy Dell, and striking into a pleasant road, rode along at a moderate pace for several hours. Susan, as yet, had not heard from her father's family, and she almost despaired of seeing any of them.

"Perhaps," said she to Kate, "father has not done well, or he may be dead. I feel sad when I think of him."

"Cast off this sadness, Susan," answered her friend. "Remember there is One who knows all things. Go to him, and ask him, if consistent, to lead you to your family. Believe he is able to do this; and in his wonder-working providence he will do it, if he sees it best. Thus leave this care with him, and your heart will be at rest."

Susan profited by this advice, and enjoyed her ride, with a feeling of child-like confidence in her Father, whose care had provided so liberally for every want of man.

"Even my taste for the beautiful is gratified by his love and power," she thought; "then why, O my soul! should I distrust his willingness to gratify my desires, whenever they are reasonable and right? I will repose on the many assurances of love he has given me, and be satisfied."

At a distance of ten or twelve miles from home, the party stopped at a public house, the appearance of which promised comfort, if not on a liberal scale. Its proprietor was a gentlemanly, pleasant man, in rather feeble health. The appearance of his wife corresponded with that of himself. The little parlor into which our friends were ushered on their arrival was neatly furnished, and its arrangements suggestive of quiet and comfort, which were sought for Mrs. Felton by the party, all of whom were aware that she needed rest. They had been allured into a rough road in pursuit of a lovely prospect; and the ladies were all weary, and in need of repose for a while.

After they were pleasantly ensconced in the various places inviting them to rest which this western parlor afforded, and had taken some refreshment, Mr. Marshly proposed leaving them for a few hours.

"I find," said that gentleman, "that we are within six

or eight miles of Elmsdale, where a gentleman resides with whom I have some business to transact. If you have no objections to being left, I should like to ride over there while you are resting here. Peter shall stop here, too. I shall not need him."

The ladies all consented to this proposal; and Mr. Marshly left them before noon, promising to return in season for them all to reach home before night. Near the middle of the afternoon, the sun, which had during the day shone brightly, became obscured by clouds. The air had been sultry for some hours, yet a shower had not been expected by any of the party until now. Mary felt anxious, because she feared her husband might be exposed to the rain, if any came.

"I am sorry that I did not urge him to remain here with us," she said. "I shall never forgive myself for not doing so, if any accident befalls him."

Looking out of the window at the fast-gathering blackness that was mantling the south-west, she shuddered as she beheld the forked lightning playing, ever and anon, amid the portentous gloom, and retreated from the window to a sofa, upon which she sank, and, leaning her head upon its arm, buried her face in her hands.

Loud peals of thunder rapidly succeeded each other. Each successive peal became louder, and every gleam of lightning flashed more and more vividly; while the rain poured in torrents, and gave to the scene without a gloominess almost terrible. The wind blew wildly, and its rage levelled many a fair floweret of the vast plain around the tavern.

"Mary," said Kate, approaching her friend, and sitting

by her side, "look up, dear! Do not give way to fear Remember 'our Father is at the helm,' — he will guide us all safely through every storm."

"It is for my husband I fear," said Mary. "What if he should now be out in the open fields in this tempest?"

"Why, then our Father will take care of him. He can easily do it. He is never at a loss for means."

"I will try to trust him, and be cheerful," said Mary.

She made an effort to "smile at all her fears;" but it was not easy nor natural, as she expressed it, to feel at ease, when enduring suspense of any kind.

The storm continued during several hours. The war of elements did not cease until near nightfall. The whole party looked anxiously for Mr. Marshly until near midnight, but he came not. They at length retired to rest; and Mrs. Felton and Susan soon fell asleep, but Mary could not find that solace. Kate, whose sympathy for her friend made her also wakeful, was her companion in watching during that long-remembered night.

CHAPTER XIX.

"It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

After Mr. Marshly left the ladies at the hotel, he rode for sometime leisurely towards Elmsdale. His mind was occupied with what he saw on the way. Rural beauty met his gaze on every side; and, as he seldom wearied in admiring the works of nature, he forgot, for a time, that the period he could devote to such enjoyment must be limited. Rallying at length from his abstraction, he looked at his watch; and, finding the hours were passing more rapidly than he had been aware, he spurred his horse into a brisk trot, which took him to Elmsdale about an hour after noon.

Having dined, and attended to his business, he started on his return ride near the middle of the afternoon. The sun was partially hid behind a thin cloud when he started, and he congratulated himself upon the prospect of a cooler atmosphere than he had been indulged with on his way thither. He was admiring the veiled brightness of the world's great cheering orb, when the sound of distant thunder met his ear. Looking about, in order to discern the appearance of the sky, he felt satisfied that it betokened a shower. The cloud was not very near, however; and he hoped to be able to reach the place where the ladies were awaiting him ere it should rain.

Mr. Marshly, being an admirer of the sublime in nature, allowed himself time to view the grand display that was inviting his gaze. A wide-spread, level country was be-

fore him, dotted with here and there a hill, upon whose sides stood, in stately, and at the moment solemn, majesty, large trees, swaying gently to and fro in obedience to the breeze, and looking down, as if in thoughtful tenderness, upon the tiny shrubs that grew spontaneously at their feet. The green grass, ornamented with flowers, and waved by the wind, grew luxuriantly; also large fields of grain that stretched on one side far into the distance.

Mr. Marshly wished for time to sketch this beautiful scenery. It was a vain wish, as he felt on perceiving that the wind had suddenly changed, and was now blowing in a direction to hasten the threatened storm. He looked in every direction for a shelter for himself and horse. The animal was frightened at the vivid lightning that was now almost constantly blinding both rider and horse. At length, in the far distance was seen smoke, curling gracefully in its ascent from a chimney, which gave to our horseman promise of a safe retreat from the storm. He had already turned from the road he had travelled, when he went out into a by-path that he had been informed would shorten his homeward ride.

His bounding steed, needing not now the aid of the spur to quicken his pace, dashed wildly forward, and became unmanageable, as he was suddenly surrounded by a gleam of lightning that was accompanied by a tremendous peal of thunder, well-nigh stunning in its effect upon both man and beast. It was impossible for Mr. Marshly to keep his seat on the saddle; for the affrighted horse reared and plunged, and then sped rapidly into a grove near by, where the branches of trees soon dislodged him, and he was thrown quite a distance upon the ground. He arose

and stood for a moment upon his feet, bewildered with what had passed. It was only for a moment, however; for again the thunder rolled even louder than before, the lightning's flash was brighter, and the overtaken traveller was prostrated senseless upon the earth. His noble horse was dead. The same bolt that had lain low his rider had killed the spirited creature.

Providentially, a man, who was hurrying to the house to which Mr. Marshly had been attracted by the sight of smoke, was in sight of this gentleman when he fell. Hastening his footsteps, the stranger was soon at his side. He feared, at first, that life was extinct; but after persevering for a short time in the application of cold water, which was liberally applied to his head and face, the gentleman gave signs of life. He was unconscious of his whereabouts and situation while he was raised upon his feet by the strong arm of the rough dweller in the western wilds, upon whom he was now dependent, and borne forward towards his home.

The rain poured, yea almost streamed, upon the couple as they proceeded on their way. The warring of the elements became less terrific as the home of the man was reached, but it did not cease. The thunder still rolled through the dark-vaulted heavens, and the sheeted lightning overspread the landscape for several hours. The wife of the stranger who rescued Mr. Marshly from death had been straining her eyes in search of her husband ever since the storm commenced, and ran out to meet him on his approach. She assisted in carrying the disabled gentleman into the house, where he was soon divested of his wet clothing. A comfortable bed was prepared in one

corner of the one large room on the first floor in this log house, upon which Mr. Marshly was laid. A fire, which was burning for cooking purposes, was replenished from the wood-pile, and soon surrounded by the dripping clothes of the unconscious guest in that humble yet peaceful abode.

At his wife's suggestion, the host tried the effects of friction upon the stunned stranger, as he was called by the woman; cold bathing also was resorted to, and every other remedy that these humane people could apply. A physician was not to be thought of on this occasion. The distance of twelve miles, the ceaseless rain, and the fast approaching darkness of early nightfall, forbade this great comfort. The persevering, kind efforts made by these good people to restore Mr. Marshly to consciousness were early rewarded by his falling into a heavy sleep.

The rain by this time had ceased to fall, and soon after the stars shone brightly upon the refreshed herbage of earth, as if smiling their approval of its freshness and beauty. All was tranquil within this dwelling that was remote from the elegance and artificial refinement of life. The duties of the day being over, the family seated themselves around a table, upon which had been placed the work-basket of the wife and mother, some choice books, — besides a Bible, that occupied a conspicuous place, and was soon opened by the head of the household.

Just then a knock was heard at the only door of the dwelling. The woman ran to see that a curtain was closely drawn before the bed, so that the sleeper might be screened from observation; while John, the eldest child, opened the door, and admitted a middle-aged man, followed by a stranger gentleman and one or two young men.

"Good evening, neighbor Dixon," said our host. "I'm glad to see yer, though it's so wet I hardly expected you'd come over to-night."

"Couldn't stop for a little water, anyhow," answered the person addressed, "so long as this friend of ours was willing to come."

So saying, in a hearty manner, he presented the Rev. Mr. Ernest to his friends. A hearty greeting and shaking of hands followed this introduction, such as cannot be appreciated except by those who have welcomed to their backwoods home a gospel minister.

"I thought," said Mr. Dixon, "that you would like to see this gentleman; besides, I felt as if we could have a prayer-meeting, — what say ye to it, neighbor?"

"I should like it 'bove all things, if it won't disturb our visitor here, whose's asleep just now on the bed."

"He sleeps so sound," said the wife of the man, who was none other than Mr. Wilkins, "that he would not be disturbed; at least I hope he won't, for I want to have a meeting."

It was soon agreed that a meeting should be opened by a prayer offered by Mr. Dixon, who was so thoughtful of the comfort of the sleeping stranger, that he hardly raised his voice to an ordinary pitch. The good man's example was followed by all who spoke or prayed. They sang but once, and then gentle notes of melody ascended to heaven, while the words of that sweet little hymn commencing, —

"Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in kindred love,"

were feelingly pronounced by each one in that little circle. An exhortation was made by the man of God, which was encouraging as well as instructive. Refreshing too, it was

felt to be, by those who could not statedly enjoy the means of grace.

The sleeper was not forgotten during this hour of prayer. Many a petition was presented in his behalf. After an hour or more of sleep, Mr. Marshly awoke to consciousness, and was very much surprised to find himself in bed; but did not speak, for he heard the sound of voices that were singing the praises of God.

"Where am I?" thought he. He made an effort to bring the past before his mind. At first everything was confused, but he was soon able to recollect being thrown from his horse, and endeavoring to arise; after that all was a blank. He pulled aside the curtain, so as to look out upon the little group of faithful souls who were at that moment assuming the loveliest attitude of devotion. They were kneeling before the mercy-seat, and with the eye of faith discerning the holy of holies. The beholder was awed; and, when he heard the best of Heaven's blessings supplicated for himself, his heart glowed with gratitude towards his heavenly Father for the shelter he was enjoying.

He lay silently observing the scene before him until the little assemblage broke up, and the family were left by themselves; then, throwing aside the curtain, in order to make himself seen by them, he exclaimed in feeble accents:

"Where am I, and how came I here?"

"You are with friends," replied Mr. Wilkins, "and you were brought here by these strong arms of mine. I was n't far off from you when your horse was killed, and you thrown to the ground and laid low by the lightning. I got to ye soon enough to bring ye to life, and then I toted ye home, and that's the whole story."

"I thank you, my friend," began Mr. Marshly, "for having saved my life."

"No need of any thanks, I'm sure," responded the man. "It would be an ugly dog that could let a fellow-critter lay and die, rather than take the trouble to save his life when he had a chance to."

Mrs. Wilkins now brought forward some nice porridge she had carefully prepared against her guest should wake, and was delighted to see him swallow a portion of the same with apparent relish.

"What time of night is it?" asked Mr. Marshly.

After looking at the wooden clock which stood upon a shelf in an opposite corner of the room, Mr. Wilkins informed him that it was past nine o'clock.

"I wish I could go on my way to-night," said Mr. Marshly, attempting to rise.

The effort satisfied him that he must remain quiet, until morning at least; and the friendly people under whose roof he had been brought urged him to content himself until he was able to travel. Being assured that he needed repose ere he could reach his friends, he bade those about him good-night, and composed himself to sleep. He rested during the night; and, though weak, he found himself refreshed when he awoke in the morning.

It was early when he opened his eyes upon his rustic surroundings, which he scanned with interest for a few moments. The scene was new to him; never before had he been in such a place. His thoughts, however, soon diverged from his own whereabouts, and dwelt anxiously upon the party he had left at the hotel.

What would Mary think had become of him? was a

question that made him sad, as he mentally asked it. She must think something had befallen him, and he endured the worst of agony's suspense.

Mr. Wilkins broke in upon his reverie by descending a flight of rough stairs that led to the loft over his head.

"How do you find yourself this fine morning, my friend?" said he to Mr. Marshly, as he came down and approached the bed.

"Better," was the reply, "but rather weak. If I *had* my horse here, I fear I should not be able to ride him home. Is there any one whom I can get to go to Oak Clearing to procure me a carriage?"

"Yes, by'm-by," said his host, as he brought the gentleman's clothes, and placed them within his reach. "I wouldn't git up yet, though," said he; "wait till breakfast is ready."

Mr. Marshly, feeling little disposition to move, drew his curtain, and remained in bed until the preparations for breakfast were completed. He then dressed, and went out of doors to wash, as was the custom of the household.

A plain yet comfortable repast was placed in humble style upon the rough table. Its want of polish was hid by a cloth of snowy whiteness, though it was of coarse material; and altogether the breakfast presented an inviting appearance. After Mr. Wilkins had reverently invoked the blessing of God upon the food before them, they seated themselves around this social board, and ate with cheerful hearts.

While at table, Mr. Wilkins was interrogated by his guest in regard to the length of time he had resided in that section of the country, its peculiar advantages, and

many other questions called forth by what was around the place. The question "How long have you lived here?" was answered with manly pride by the owner of the place,—

"It is almost three years, sir, since I began to build this house; and a good job it's been for me."

"Every thing about your place betokens thrift," replied the guest, anxious to lead him to give something of his history.

"Yes," said the man. "I have been blest ever since I came here, and afore too for that matter, else I could n't have got out here. You see I used to be a poor critter. I'm that now, but then I used to live in Virginny; and, if you know any thing about things there, ye know that the poor whites in that region are clear down."

"I know something about it," replied Mr. Marshly. "I have spent some months in Virginia at different times."

"Well, then," continued his host, "you don't need to be told that the whites there that are poor haven't much chance to live. They are discouraged, and do n't try much to bring themselves up even as far as they might, but sink right down, drink whiskey, smoke tobacco, and say it's no use to try to be anybody or do any thing. The slaves do all the work; and it isn't respectable like for folks to work that ain't colored, ye see, any how."

"Whereabouts in Virginia did you live?" asked Mr. Marshly, who was much interested in what his host was relating.

"In a place called Groveton," was the reply.

"I should like to hear your story very much," answered the other.

"I will tell it ye," responded the man, "after John's set off for the place ye spoke on. Oak Clearing, warn't it?"

"Yes."

"Breakfast being finished, Mr. Wilkins took a well-worn Bible from the shelf, saying to Mr. Marshly,—

"We won't lose any time in stopping to worship our Father in heaven, I take it. His blessing kinder helps a body along all day."

He then read the twenty-first psalm, and offered a heart-felt, though simple prayer, in which the stranger whom God's providence had introduced to their dwelling was affectionately remembered. The simplicity and Christian sincerity of the man's manner increased the interest of his guest.

John was sent to Oak Clearing immediately after the little group had attended family worship; and the plain-hearted man seated himself in the doorway, and continued the account of himself which he had already commenced.

"Ye see," said he, "I was a real bad man. I thought I might as well give up ever thinking I could be anybody. I knowed I was looked down on by all the whites that wasn't jist like me; and the blacks, too, they felt like the folks about 'em, ye see; and I was always hearing some speech or other about 'the poor white trash,' as they called us. Sometimes we went hungry for days, because we couldn't git work, or catch fish, or shoot game, or do any thing; and then some of us would be tempted to sell our own children to the slave-dealers who'd come along and offer us money. I was that bad that I struck a bargain myself, with one of these fellers, for my oldest child. She was good-looking, he said, and he would give me thirty dollars down for her. The gal didn't want ter go, and she and her mother tuk on dreffully. It made me mad to hear

'em beg and cry so; for I thought, what is the use on't? — a body can't starve for the sake of keeping their family 'round um. I went out a piece from the little hut we then lived in; and, as soon as I was gone, my daughter Susan, who was the one as was going to be sold, ran off with all her might through the pine grove there towards Mr. Felton's place. She heard they was good folks, and I 'spose she thought they'd hide her away, or something. As soon as I'd found she'd gone, I went arter her; and, when I got half-way through the grove, I came upon her where she'd been stopped by a beautiful young lady, who, I found out afterwards, was sister to Mr. Felton. I told Suse to go back, but it warn't no sort o' use. I felt drefful strange. I was mad, 'shamed, sorry, and every thing else together. The lady seemed like an angel to me, — so good; and she spoke so kind to Suke and ter me too, that my mad feeling began to go away. She talked considerable; and then she told me that if I'd let her she'd take Suke, and give me thirty dollars. She said she'd take care of her, — she did not want her for a slave. I was dumfounded, ye see. I couldn't hardly believe her, 'cause I didn't know then any thing about the Bible, and I thought everybody looked out for their own good and nothing else."

"You have learned that it is otherwise now, I believe," said Mr. Marshly, interrupting his narrative.

"I hope I have," answered the man; "and it was this Christian lady, this Miss Felton, that has been the means of bringing about this change. Why, I was nothing but a heathen, when I fust saw her. She took Susan, gave me victuals to eat and carry home, paid me the money, as she had promised, for the girl, — but did not stop when

she had done that. She said I must try to make the most of myself, and be a man; and she came to our hut and spoke kind words to my wife, and told me how to buy things, and peddle round the country little by little; and so I got along. This lady bought my goods to help me, and got other folks to. She learnt my wife to read, and did all she could to have the children learn; and they did learn some, — so that their mother and they could read some considerable afore we come out to this place.

"This Miss Felton liked the idea of my coming west; and I worked and saved, and every thing went well with me; for I up and let whiskey alone, and left off being lazy and discouraged, and began to believe what this lady said, — that I might be somebody, if I only resolved to, and thought I could. I got enough to bring us out here, and had enough left to get us a small piece of land; and, as it was warm weather, we managed to live sort er decent, and not make it cost us much, until I worked, and got so I could begin to build this log house. I worked for this man who was here last night. This neighbor Dixon, — he helped me. He is a good man; and after a while he found out just what I was and had been, and he appeared to want to do every thing possible to make it pleasant for us. This man, ye see, has the same idee of things that Miss Felton has. I told him so, and he says its because he loves the same Saviour that she loves, and studies the same Bible. True, he is'nt so polished like as she is; but in one thing they are alike.

"Well, ye see he helped me so that I could get the house fitted to live in the first winter we was here. He was afraid the cold would make us sick, as we hadn't been

used to it at all; but somehow we kept great fires, and got along with very little sickness. When any of us was sick, our neighbors was very good, — particularly Mr. Dixon. I had one bad spell, though it was short And, it being cold weather then, this good man had time to come in and see me; and he used to come every day, and talk about the same matters that Miss Felton had always told me concerned me most of any thing. A man came along, too, who brought books and tracts, and told the same story about religion, and said he wanted me to be a Christian, just as the lady and my neighbor had so many times, that it set me to thinking. I wondered what good it could do *them* to help me, or have me good. I knowed by their way that they wasn't 'specting any thing from me; so I concluded it was because they wanted me to be happy, and if that was the reason they must love me. And then I thought and thought about the Saviour's dying to have sinners saved, till I see how wicked I had been never to think on't afore, or thank him, or love him, or do any thing good. Then I said to myself, 'I will go to him now. He says "Come," and I will believe him.' I did go to Jesus then, wicked as I was, and asked him to give me a heart to love him and do right. I felt sorry for what I had always done against him; but my wife read in the Bible that it was the guilty Jesus came to save, that he would cast out none who came to him; and I believed that meant me, for I felt I had gone to him. My wife found a friend in my Saviour soon after this, and ever since then we have taken a great deal of comfort. To be sure, we are doing wrong sometimes, and that makes us unhappy for a spell, till we can go to our Saviour again, as we did at first, and find forgiveness.

"Miss Felton has done every thing for our Susan, and has made a real lady of her. A real lady I say; for though she was dressed up smart, and was with nice folks, and was larnin' a great deal, she was not above her poor relations, but seemed to love us, and care more for us by half than she did when she lived with us there in Groveton in dirt and rags. I used to think the rich people was proud and hateful, but I find they aint. I don't see why poor folks should seem so envious like at them that is rich. I hope I never shall have this feeling again, as I used to."

"Then you think, my friend, that you have prospered more since you began to do right?" said Mr. Marshly.

"I do. I love now to go to God, and tell him all my feelings, and ask him to help me; and when I do he always does, I believe, for I git along better with every thing. I want now to know something about Susan and the Feltons; and so I've been praying that some way would open so that I could git a letter to 'em, and since you got up this morning I've been thinking perhaps you'd have the goodness to write one for me, and take it to some place where the post could take it to Groveton."

"I would gladly do a great deal more than that for you, but it is not necessary that a letter be written. Miss Felton, her mother, and your daughter are now at Oak Clearing with my wife, and will doubtless visit you when I tell them you are here."

"What a kind heavenly Father we have indeed got!" exclaimed Mr. Wilkins with emotion.

CHAPTER XX.

"God's purposes will ripen fast."

THE ladies at the hotel were able to sleep only a few moments after the dawn of day. They then arose, endeavoring to believe themselves refreshed by the nap, and looked out of the window upon the fertile country before them. All nature was smiling, as if grateful for the shower of the day previous.

"I wish we could see Peter now," said Kate.

This wish was hardly expressed, ere the man came in sight. Like Mary and Kate, he had spent a sleepless night, and arisen early and gone to see if any thing could possibly be learned respecting Mr. Marshly. Kate called to him from the window, and he approached near enough to converse with her. Mary had previously proposed starting early in the carriage for the place Mr. Marshly had visited the day before.

"Peter," said Kate, "can't you contrive to get us a cup of tea and a little refreshment immediately, also have the horses harnessed into the carriage, so that we can start as soon as possible in search of Mr. Marshly?"

"That's what I can," replied he; and away he went to the back part of the house, where he succeeded in awaking a young woman who was one of the cooks for the establishment. A promise of a present operated as a charm to make her forget the unseasonableness of the hour for breakfast; and in a few minutes an inviting meal was smoking upon a neat little round table in the dining-room.

Susan in the meantime had dressed, and joined the ladies, who were ready for breakfast. She had arisen so quietly that Mrs. Felton was not disturbed, and, sympathizing deeply with the feelings of Mary and Kate, wished to accompany them on their early ride. In this she was indulged. After partaking of the food set before them, and engaging their attendant to be very mindful of the wishes of Mrs. Felton whenever she might awake, the little party set off with anxious feelings for the place where they hoped, but dared not expect, to find the object of their solicitude. The rain that had fallen so abundantly had made the roads so muddy that their travelling was slow. The fertility of the soil made the prospect before the travellers delightful; while, by making the roads difficult to pass over, it seemed to invite their lingering gaze.

Our party, however, was in no mood that morning for enjoying the loveliness they saw and appreciated. They reached the place that Mr. Marshly had left before the storm came on. The horses' heads were turned in a homeward direction; and, with a feeling of heart-sickness, the little company resolved to inquire of all they met concerning the missing one. They rode leisurely along, not desiring to hurry if they might. Having gone a little distance they espied a man at work in a field, of whom they made inquiry concerning the gentleman they sought. The man approached them, and, raising his hat upon one side, put his fingers through his hair, saying at the same moment, —

"You want to know if I've seen a gentleman along this way? I see one yisterday jist afore that tempest came on. He axed me ter tell him if there was a nearer

road to Oak Clearing than this, and I told him of that one," pointing to a road then in sight, leading in a different direction. "He said he would take that road, and he thought he could git hum afore the rain. The last I saw of him he was making his horse trot down that way. Maybe this gentleman is some friend of yourn?" he said inquiringly.

"He is, — or we have a friend who came this way yesterday afternoon," was the reply.

"Didn't git hum last night then?" questioned the other.

"No."

"That's bad, out in such a tempest. I declare I wish I'd knowed about it sooner; but," continued this rough man of feeling, "maybe he got so far as neighbor Wilkins's, — that's jist off that ere road a mile or so, and maybe he's safe."

"I thank you," said Kate, observing Mary looked even more distressed than ever. "We will hasten along that way as fast as possible."

Whereupon Peter, who needed no urging to proceed, drove on. They had hardly turned into the road pointed out by the man, ere they saw a large boy approaching on horseback. As he drew near, Peter reined in his horses; and Kate asked him if he had seen a gentleman on horseback riding that way, the day before.

"I seen a gentleman, but he wasn't on horseback when I see him; for his horse was killed by the lightning, and father found him lying on the ground jist like dead. But he took him up, and fetched him into our place, when he'd put water on to him for a long while. He's better though

this morning; and I'm going to Oak Clearing to fetch a carriage for him to ride home in."

"You need not go any farther," said Kate; "but turn back, and show us the way to your house."

"What is your father's name?" asked Mary.

"Wilkins," replied he.

Susan started at hearing this name, and looked earnestly at the speaker.

"How long have you been out West?" she inquired.

"Only two or three years," answered the boy. "We used to live in Groveton," he continued; "but I am glad we came to this part of the country."

"You are contented here, then, I suppose?" said Susan.

"Yes," was the laconic reply.

"Have you a sister named Susan?" inquired Kate.

The youngster opened his eyes very wide, and, looking inquiringly at Kate, answered that he had. He then asked, —

"Do you know any thing about her?"

"Here she is now," said Kate, and Susan at the moment stretched out her hand to her brother. The youth grasped it warmly, for he had an affectionate heart; and his eyes filled with tears, — not tears of sadness, however, but such as ooze from the deep fount of sacred, generous feeling.

"How glad father and mother will be!" said the brother to his sister; "father's remembered you every day in his prayers, and he's asked God to open a way for us to hear from you, and now here you are."

Mary's feelings became calm, after having been assured of the safety of her husband; and the spirits of the party

were enlivened, as they rode onward to the humble abode of a family around which many interests clustered. As the carriage drew near the dwelling of Mr. Wilkins, it was first seen by Mr. Marshly, who sat near the door anxiously awaiting its approach. Great was his surprise and pleasure, when it stopped before the house, to find his wife and her friends had come with it.

Mr. Wilkins had gone out to work a short distance from the house, but was immediately sent for to see his daughter and her benefactress. He flew on the wings of affection back to his home; and as he greeted his daughter, who came to the door to meet him, with a parental kiss, he wept for joy. The satisfaction of Kate and Mr. Wilkins at meeting each other was mutual. The former felt she had indeed found the bread she had previously cast upon the waters; while the latter rejoiced, not only upon meeting the child whom his past misconduct would have ruined but for the interposition of this friend, but because her coming at this juncture was an answer to prayer. He felt that God had heard his petitions; and his heart was encouraged, for he had received even more than he had asked.

Mr. Marshly's rescue from peril was a matter of great thankfulness to his friends. This meeting under the roof of a log-cabin was on this occasion one upon which angels might have been well pleased to look. The now Christian mother gazed fondly upon a daughter who was in a position of influence and honor. Not many years previous, that same child was wretched and degraded, wanting even the necessaries of life. What had wrought this change?

The mother's heart answered, — kind words timely

spoken; while a silent prayer was breathed by her that many more such words might be spoken to others who were erring and degraded.

Mr. Marshly reminded Kate of the time when he sneered at her attempts to reclaim the very persons whose Christian hospitality he was now enjoying.

"As soon as I discovered the fact that I had been saved from death by this friend, my conscience smote me with recollections of what I had said to you when you were endeavoring to place this very man in a situation to preserve my life."

"'God's purposes will ripen fast,'"

said Kate. "They are unfolding every hour; and," she continued, —

"'Some buds have had a little taste,
But sweet is now the flower.'

The poet, I am sure, would excuse me for altering some words in the lines just quoted, — they are thus made so applicable to our present circumstances."

After resting for a time, and partaking of some refreshment which Mrs. Wilkins was proud to offer them, the company left their hospitable host and hostess, to relieve, as soon as possible, the anxiety of Mrs. Felton, whom they had left in suspense at the hotel. It was agreed that Susan should spend a day or two with her relatives, also that Kate should visit the family again to accompany Susan to Fairy Dell.

During their return ride, they conversed upon the incidents of the past day. A deep impression had been made upon the mind of Mr. Marshly by what he had expe-

rienced. He felt grateful for his preservation from death, through the kindness of one whom he had once thought too degraded by vice to be reformed. He had seen him now a Christian, at the head of a well-ordered household, and had himself received great kindness at his hands. In a moral sense, he had seen the wilderness blossom like the rose; yea, more, he had seen roses bloom where noxious weeds had once overspread the soil.

"Never again," said he, "will I despair of the power of kindness to bring the wanderer from virtue into the right path; and never again will I attempt to excuse myself from personal effort in behalf of those whom circumstances have made in a measure dependent upon the kindness of their more prosperous neighbors. I begin to feel that every man is my neighbor, and that I live in a large neighborhood. The rich cannot do without the poor better than the latter class can do without them; and I am glad that there are opportunities presented for the exercise of benevolence. I intend to improve those offered to me better than I have heretofore done."

With heartfelt gratitude he spoke of the incidents of that journey ever after. By them he was taught a lesson that he acknowledged made him a wiser and a better man.

Not many days after the occurrence of the incidents related in the preceding pages, Mr. Marshly's visitors took leave of Fairy Dell; leaving Mary in the enjoyment of happiness as perfect as ever falls to the lot of mortals. The friends parted with mutual promises to visit each other as often as possible, and to write while separated. The parting was too hopeful to be a sad one.

A new field of usefulness was now inviting Mary to

labor, and she was encouraged by Kate to attempt and expect great things.

"I shall be very desirous to know what kind of a pioneer you will make, Mary," said Kate; "for your influence and that of your husband must have a visible effect."

"I mean you shall hear good things of me." was the reply.

Kate easily prevailed upon her mother to spend a few days in New York, ere they returned home. It was very pleasant visiting at their friends the Fieldings', she said to her mother, and also attempted to persuade herself that the society of these friends was the principal attraction the city possessed for her. Still the image of another would ever cross her mental vision, when she thought of the place in which he lived. There was yet another reason why she wished to be in New York for a short period; and this was found in a strong desire to become better acquainted with the invalid she had once visited there, and who had excited her warmest sympathies.

Their arrival at Fifth Avenue was not altogether unexpected. They were warmly welcomed, and felt themselves at once quite domesticated in the home of these much-loved friends. Carrie Stonely visited Kate as soon as she was apprised of her being in the city. Her father, too, chanced to call upon Mr. Fielding on the very next day after his company had arrived. It was not common for this medical gentleman to call upon his friends, and Mr. Fielding contended that this friendly visit was made in order to have an interview with Kate. If such was the fact, he failed in his object. Kate was glad to see him enter the room where she sat. She endeavored to act

without that disagreeable feeling of restraint from which she had suffered on previous occasions, but it would not be thrown off. Conscious that the eyes of her friends were upon her, and being fearful that they would discover her secret, she appeared more embarrassed than ever. This awkwardness of feeling made her manner towards the doctor so reserved that he left with the impression that he must be disagreeable to her.

CHAPTER XXI.

"Teach me to feel another's woe,
To hide the fault I see;
That mercy I to others show,
That mercy show to me." *Pope.*

KATE recollected, with regret, after Dr. Stonely had taken leave, that she had forgotten to make inquiries of him concerning the invalid whose name she was anxious to learn. On the day after, Carrie called again upon her friends, on Fifth Avenue; and Kate inquired if she had asked her father the name of that patient upon whom they had called, when she was last in New York.

"I must confess that I have never thought of her when I have had an opportunity to ask father about her," replied Carrie.

"Then you do not feel much interest in this poor woman," responded Kate. "One would have thought that you would have been desirous of learning the state of her health."

"If she had been a pleasant person, I should have cared about her, I dare say," was the reply; "but I do not care about disagreeable people. I like to keep a great ways off from them. Do not you, Miss Felton?"

"It is natural for every one to prefer the company of those who are lovely and agreeable to the society of those of an opposite character. Still, Carrie, we are not always to indulge our natural inclinations in this regard; for duty sometimes leads us among persons that are very unamiable. We could not learn the practice of forbearance, if we were always with the good and gentle."

"I suppose you are right," answered Carrie; "but I cannot see why it is your duty to visit this sick stranger, and feel interested in her welfare."

"She is my neighbor, Carrie, because she is a child of our common Father; and, more than this, she strongly resembles a lady that I knew, who once lived in affluence. I cannot say it is this same person; still, I have heard that this individual I speak of is now living in adverse circumstances, in some place unknown to her former friends and acquaintances. I had hoped to ascertain ere now the name of this lady we visited; but shall not give up seeking her again, although a second visit will be to me an awkward affair indeed, because she treated me with so much reserve on the other occasion."

"Miss Felton, you might have asked father yourself about this cross patient, if you had thought of it."

This girlish remark embarrassed Kate for a few moments. She soon recovered herself, however, and replied that it was very stupid in her not to have done so, when she had an opportunity.

"You never were stupid, I am sure, Miss Felton," was Carrie's earnest reply; "but father says you are very reserved towards himself."

"I have never intended to be reserved towards your father, Carrie; I am sorry he has that impression of me: but suppose we now go and visit the lady we have been conversing about."

"What! would you have me go again to see this peevish mortal?"

"Yes."

Carrie looked earnestly into the face of her friend, as if

she would read her thoughts. Kate smiled, and said in a gentle tone: —

"I wish you to go with me, Carrie dear, because it will be of use to you to see every phase of life. It is profitable for us all to know as much of the detail of life as possible. It is good for us to see humanity in its every grade."

"I will go for the sake of being in your society, Miss Felton."

"I thank you, Carrie, for such a proof of affection," said Kate; and the two started at once upon their walk to the little court where they had previously seen the lady they now sought.

They soon found her in the same humble dwelling. As they stood upon the doorstep, Carrie involuntarily drew behind Kate, who knocked gently for admittance. The door was opened by a tall, graceful girl, apparently about sixteen years of age. She had been weeping, and traces of tears were visible upon her pale and interesting coun tenance.

"Does a lady reside in this house whom Dr. Stonely attended a few weeks since, when she was quite ill?" asked Kate.

"There is a lady living here who was visited by Dr. Stonely," was the mild reply.

"I did not learn her name; but, having seen her once, I feel desirous to know more about her health," said Kate. "I have been absent from the city some little time," she continued, "but have thought of her often; and, if it will not be deemed by her an intrusion, I would request an interview."

"I think," answered the young lady, "that you may venture to walk in."

Her voice trembled as she spoke. She then went on to say that the person thus sought was her mother, who had only a few minutes before remarked that she wished, if she was not abandoned of God, that he would send some one to care for her now; "and you have come." These last words were uttered in an agitated tone; and the tears, that had for a time been driven back, now flowed afresh. Kate pressed the young girl's hand affectionately, and was led by her into the same little room that she had been invited into before. Carrie followed in silence; and, the two being seated, Kate made some inquiries in relation to the lady, of the daughter, in whom she felt greatly interested.

It was evident that the blight of some great sorrow had fallen upon her youth. Still, she was lovely, and the sweetness of subdued feeling was expressed in her intelligent countenance.

In reply to Kate's kind inquiries, the young lady told her that her mother's health was extremely delicate; that her spirits were depressed, for she was very lonely, having no relatives near her.

"Has she the means to support her family?" asked Kate, kindly; "or is she anxious in regard to this matter?"

"We have taken sewing to earn our living, since we have been in New York," answered the young girl, in tremulous accents; then added, "we once had enough."

There was now a short pause in the conversation. Kate was desirous of asking the name of this afflicted family, yet hesitated. Carrie was becoming greatly interested in the girl, who appeared to be about the same age as herself, and who was at this moment making a great effort to compose her agitated feelings. A feeble voice from an

adjoining room called Mina, and the graceful figure of the young creature whom Carrie was admiring moved towards the door. As she was leaving the room, she said,—

"Please excuse me for a few minutes;" then, as Kate assented, she left them.

After a few minutes she returned, and asked Kate to go to her mother's room. The lady was lying upon her bed, apparently quite ill. Her countenance bore the traces of weeping, and expressed pride mingled with great sorrow. Kate, as she approached her, extended her hand kindly. The lady offered her hand with seeming hesitation of manner, and invited Kate to be seated. She sat down, and, addressing the invalid in the kindliest tone, said,—

"Your daughter told me that probably you would like to see me. I called from purely friendly motives to see you; and I wish to be towards you, in this season of trial, what I would wish you to be to me, were I in circumstances like those in which you are now placed."

The lady was silent for a minute, during which she struggled vainly to suppress the emotion she could not hide. At length she spoke, and her voice trembled as she said, —

"I was not always as you see me now."

"So I thought," replied Kate soothingly. "Dr. Stonely spoke of your case to me some time ago, and I have felt interested in your welfare ever since."

"Did he tell you my name?" asked the invalid eagerly.

"He did not; and I have not yet learned it from any other source," said Kate; thinking perhaps, that, as there now seemed to be a suitable opening, she would herself

communicate that piece of intelligence. She was disappointed, however, for no answer was given her; and she proceeded, —

"I presume Dr. Stonely still attends you?"

"No, he has not been here for some time," was the reply.

"Were you well enough to be left," asked Kate, "at the time he withdrew his visits, or did you grow weary of him?"

"Neither," responded the sick lady. "I felt that I could not afford to pay him, and therefore dismissed him, without telling him the reason."

"Would you like to see him again now, if it were not for this obstacle?"

"I should," said the other; and tears rolled down her cheks as she added, "I like Dr. Stonely. He has been very kind to me, and I am sorry that I am not able to pay him for his services."

"Don't let a thought of that disturb you for a moment," said Kate. "I know that the doctor would willingly attend you, without remuneration; for he is a truly benevolent man, and loves to do good. His daughter is in the next room now; would you like to see her?"

"No, not just yet. As you appear to feel kindly towards me, I will tell you something of my history, now we are alone."

Mina had sat down in the room with Carrie; and Kate was glad of an opportunity to learn something of her who had hitherto seemed shrouded in mystery. She drew her chair very near the bed, and by kind looks and words encouraged the sufferer to speak freely in regard to herself and family.

"Once," said she, "I should have felt indignant, if any one had even hinted the possibility of my becoming poor. My husband was wealthy, and I did not doubt but that his wealth would always last. Yet, in an unexpected hour, it was all lost. I was in Paris at the time; and upon the death of my husband immediately followed the loss of our property. Thus I was left, bereft of riches, in a strange land, with only my daughter Mina to lean upon. She seemed to feel our afflictions more on my account than her own. She is a good girl; and, had it not been for her, I do not think I could have lived until now. I was beside myself, for a time, before I left Paris; and, when I came to realize my situation, I found I was poor. Oh, that dreadful word! How could I pronounce it and live! But I was obliged to acknowledge to myself first, and afterwards to my child, that I was little better than a beggar. I was dependent upon the benevolence of strangers for means to defray my expenses back to my native country. My two youngest children were at a boarding school in New England; but I was obliged to take them to this city, and to this miserable tenement, where we have lived during the last two years. I took sewing to gain a livelihood, but was unable to accomplish a great deal, as my sorrows preyed upon me so that mental anxiety made me ill. Most of our best clothing has been sold to procure the necessaries of life. Mina sews all that she is able, and so do I; but all we can do is not sufficient to support us. Yet the idea of being dependent upon the generosity of others is very painful to me."

She paused, after uttering these last words, weary with

the effort she had made, and overcome with the emotion she endeavored vainly to hide.

"Have you no relatives," asked Kate, "to whom you can apply in this hour of need?"

"None," replied the other, mournfully. "My parents are dead, and all my other relatives have long since ceased to care for me. They considered me proud and imperious in my prosperity; and I would rather starve now than let them know my present circumstances."

"I don't like to hear you say so," said Kate, mildly. "I fear it is pride that makes you shrink from letting them know your misfortunes. Is it that, or are you afraid of being repulsed by them, if you tell them the story of your sorrows?"

"They would not treat me kindly, I am sure; but would tell me that I deserved all I suffer, for my former haughtiness." And she wept, and hid her face in her hands, as she ceased speaking.

"Do not distress yourself any more now," said Kate, tenderly. "You shall find a friend in me; and, if I mistake not, you will have another in Dr. Stonely. So cheer up! and look above your cares to Him who saith, 'Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will answer thee.'"

"I fear," said the invalid with a deep-drawn sigh, "that it would be of no use for me to think of God now, since I have neglected him all my life long."

"Then that is a strong reason why you should remember him now," was Kate's answer, which she gave in a most affectionate manner; at the same time handing a small gold coin to the lady, who she feared she had allowed to converse longer than she ought. The money

was received with an expression of gratitude; and Kate took her leave, promising to repeat her call very soon.

When she entered the apartment where she had left Carrie, she found her engaged in conversation with Mina, and apparently on familiar terms with her. When Carrie left her to accompany her friend, she took Mina kindly by the hand, and begged her to think of her as one who felt an affectionate interest in her welfare.

"I shall not forget you, but shall come again to-morrow; and now good-by."

Tears filled the eyes of Mina as she returned the pressure of Carrie's hand; but she smiled through her tears, and Carrie's heart was made glad by the thought that she had afforded comfort to a sorrowing fellow-being.

"Miss Felton," said Carrie, as they were walking towards home, "I am glad that we went to that house."

"So am I," was Kate's reply. "I feel almost certain that this lady is a Mrs. Upton whom I first met in the cars at the same time you and I first saw each other."

"Now I remember," said Carrie, "Mina was that little girl whom I so wished to speak to, when I felt so lonely, before you spoke to me."

"I *think* she was the very same little girl," responded Kate.

"How changed her circumstances!" remarked Carrie, thoughtfully.

"Changed indeed," answered her friend.

"I think," said Carrie, "that Mina must be a lovely girl, she seems so patient and mild; but I don't believe I ever can like her mother. She was so proud and disagreeable when I first saw her, that I can never forget it of her ladyship."

"Are you quite sure of that, Carrie?" asked Kate pleasantly.

"I believe I am," replied Carrie.

"Even if she should prove to be more agreeable now?" interrogated her companion.

"Do you suppose she can be agreeable," inquired Carrie, "when she is so proud?"

"There is One, my dear girl, who is abundantly able to give her a meek and quiet spirit. We must ask him to do it, and at the same time seek the same blessing for ourselves."

"You are better than I am, Miss Felton; for you are always thinking of doing good to some one," observed Carrie. "Would I were like you!"

"I ought to be more like Him who went about doing good," was Kate's rejoinder. "I should be happier if I were."

"I believe you are right, Kate," said Carrie; "for I never felt any more pleasure than at the moment I found I was a comfort to the lady's daughter whom we have just left."

"It is pleasant to hear you say so, my dear Carrie; for I hope you will be encouraged to repeat the same kind office you have performed to-day."

Carrie did not forget, this time, to speak to her father concerning the lady, as on the former occasion she had done. She was too deeply interested in the daughter to forget the wants of her mother, disagreeable though she was.

"Father," said she, as they were sitting together after dinner, "do you remember the lady you attended last

summer, who was so peevish and proud, upon whom Miss Felton and myself called?"

"I do," answered Dr. Stonely; "but why do you ask?"

"Because I feel interested to learn her name," replied Carrie. "Miss Felton requested me to ask you, when she visited her at the time she was in the city before, but I neglected to do so. To-day I have been to see her again with Miss Felton, who thinks this lady is the very same person whom we saw in the cars at the time we first met *her*."

"Indeed!" responded the doctor. "I have never thought of her when I have seen this sick lady, and yet it has ever been my impression that I had met with her before. I do not know her name; for I was only asked to attend a lady who was ill, and told the name of the street and the number of her dwelling, without being informed of her name. How is she now, Carrie?"

"Really ill," answered she in a tone of commiseration; "but she told Miss Felton that she requested you to withdraw your visits because she had not the means to pay you, — though, were it otherwise, she would be glad of your advice."

"If that is the case I will call upon her this afternoon," said the doctor. "I received the impression, at the time she dismissed me, that she was dissatisfied with my services. I am glad to learn that I was mistaken."

Dr. Stonely, true to the kind impulse of his heart, visited Mrs. Upton — for this poor lady was none other than herself — that very day. She was surprised and pleased at seeing him, for he called in as a friend who felt an

interest in her welfare; and so delicately were his services given that one would have thought himself the obliged party, rather than the invalid.

The next day Kate again repeated her visit, and again was accompanied by Carrie; and she was welcomed, too, by both mother and daughter. Kate carried some little delicacies, for which the lady would not have ventured to expend the money given her the day previous; and it was pleasant to Kate to observe that ugly feeling of haughtiness and reserve giving place to sentiments of gratitude. Still it was evident that she shrank from the disclosure of her name; and neither Kate nor the doctor would ask her to tell them who she was.

Dr. Stonely and Kate met at the door of this humble residence the day that she made her second call. How he wished he could ascertain her real sentiments towards himself! and yet he dreaded to know certainly that she was indifferent towards him. Now, although in a state of suspense, he could hope that he was regarded favorably.

Kate reciprocated his feelings. She was fearful of betraying a partiality that she did not love to confess to herself; and this feeling caused her to act towards the doctor with more reserve than she manifested towards any other person with whom she was acquainted. Carrie's quick perception enabled her to discern this, and it gave her pain.

"I wish," she said to Kate, as they left her father at Mrs. Upton's, after he and Kate had exchanged a few formal sentences at that lady's door, "that you would be as sociable with father now, Miss Kate, as you were the first time you ever saw him. I thought you liked him

then; but I do not believe you do now. For, if you did, you would not seem so towards him."

"How is 'seeming so,' Carrie? Don't I treat your father with respectful politeness? I intend to, I am sure; for I respect him very much indeed."

"Yes; but I don't like to hear you say that you only respect him. It is such a stiff, cold word. Respect is not love, and I want you to love him."

Kate felt confused, as the thought of her secret feelings towards the sweet girl's father intruded itself upon her. Carrie perceived this, and was afraid she had offended her friend. She told her so; but Kate answered her affectionately, and, smiling at her girlish frankness, said, —

"Carrie, respect is not a cold word, as you call it. All true affection is based upon respect. One cannot sincerely love another without first respecting them."

"Then I do hope you will love my father some time," answered Carrie.

Kate smiled, but did not reply. During tea, on that evening, Carrie thought her father was unusually silent and thoughtful. He asked Carrie if she knew how long Miss Felton expected to remain in the city.

"She intends stopping two or three weeks, I believe," replied Carrie; "and I wish she would come here once, if no more than that, before she goes home. Have you ever invited her to visit us, father?"

"No," answered her father. "I never have had an opportunity as yet; but, should one present itself, I shall endeavor to improve it. Miss Felton seems to feel a deep interest in the case of that nameless lady, and in fact she is the friend of all who need sympathy and aid. I hope

you will imitate her example, Carrie; she is a good pattern for you to follow."

"I wish I could always have her near me," replied Carrie. "I love her very much indeed, and I think I should be better if I was under her influence all the time."

Dr. Stonely smiled as Carrie said this, but did not speak, and soon after left the house.

"I wonder what father is thinking about just now," said Carrie mentally, as he went out.

CHAPTER XXII.

"Trust thou in God. He'll guide thee,
When arms of flesh shall fail;
With every aid provide thee,
And make his grace prevail."

KATE almost shrank from meeting even her mother, when she returned from this visit to Mrs. Upton. She wished to be alone, yet this feeling could not for hours be indulged; for company had arrived during her absence, and she could not excuse herself and retire to her room, lest Mr. Fielding should suspect the state of her mind. She endeavored to school her heart to calmness, but the effort was vain. She accused herself of folly, and struggled hard to banish every thought of him of whom it was impossible not to think.

A cheerfulness she did not feel was preserved by her during the evening; and none, save her ever-watchful parent, detected that it was not real. Her mother saw that her mind was occupied with other than present objects; and she suspected that she had met with Dr. Stonely, but forbore to ask Kate, thinking it best to refrain from manifesting an interest upon the subject that above all others interested her the most deeply. She knew that her daughter was much pleased with the doctor; and her knowledge of human nature had led her to think, from his manner, that he was as much interested in Kate. Why they were so reserved towards each other she could not imagine, and she did not feel willing to interrogate Kate upon the subject.

After Mrs. Felton and Kate retired to their chamber on the night in allusion, Kate related all that had occurred during her absence from home; passing lightly over her meeting with Dr. Stonely. Mrs. Felton felt greatly interested in the case of the lady who had experienced so great a change; and she expressed a determination to visit her before leaving the city.

"I cannot but hope she will tell me her name, and I cannot but believe that she will yet find that her severe trials are blessings in disguise," said Mrs. Felton. "I pray that they may prove so."

There was silence for a few minutes, and then she asked Kate if she had ever been at Dr. Stonely's residence.

"Why no, mother!" exclaimed Kate; "why should I go thither?"

"And why should you not call there with Carrie, when you are out with her some time? It would be perfectly proper, I am sure," was her mother's pleasant reply.

"It would seem as though I wished to court the society of the doctor," said Kate; "and I would not have him think, for the world, that I cared for it."

"It would not be wrong in you to like the company of a worthy, intelligent gentleman like him, would it, Kate?"

"Not morally wrong," she answered.

"Nor religiously neither," added her mother. "Only the world might judge harshly; that is all."

"We cannot defy the world's opinion, mother," said Kate. "Ought we to attempt doing so, unless in cases where conventional rules set at defiance the precepts of morality and religion?"

"Perhaps not," said Mrs. Felton. "Yet your calling at Dr. Stonely's would not be a disregard of any rule. Why, it would be one of the simplest of acts! It is only yourself that attaches significance to it, Kate."

"But, mother, Dr. Stonely is reserved and distant towards me."

"Perhaps, daughter, that is all your own fault. I believe you are wholly to blame for it yourself. You are not social, as it is natural for you to be, with him; and your reserve nonplusses him. He would seem otherwise than he does, if you would only allow him to."

"I have been thinking, mother, that I had better not run the risk of meeting the doctor again at that house I have visited. If you will go in my place, I can still do for this poor creature, without going where she lives."

"Oh fie, Kate, my dear child! You must not think of doing such a foolish thing. It would seem strange in you to do so. I myself would accuse you of affectation."

Kate did not reply to what her mother had said; and, having retired to rest, Mrs. Felton soon after fell asleep. Not so Kate. In vain she courted the leaden-winged god. He would not visit her eyelids; and she lay listening to the midnight tread of mortals who were hurrying hither and thither in the streets to their homes. And, as she heard these sounds, she half forgot her own perplexities, thinking of the multitudes who, in that bustling city (that was, for the time being, her home), were living merely votaries to the pleasures of sense. For such she offered a heartfelt prayer; and her spirit became in a measure composed, and she was enabled, as often before, to cast her burdens at the feet of her Saviour.

Towards morning she slept, and did not awake until she

was aroused by her mother's telling her she must hasten, in order to make her toilet, before the ringing of the bell for breakfast.

Mrs. Felton accompanied Kate and Carrie on their next visit to Mrs. Upton. These visits were frequent; for the lady urged them at every call they made to come as often as they could, saying that she was greatly comforted by seeing them. Mrs. Felton was immediately recognized by Mrs. Upton, who appeared embarrassed at the meeting. The former, however, endeavored to make her forget the past, and divert her thoughts from any thing unpleasant, by making kind inquiries concerning her health and that of her children. The sick lady was pleased to see them, although she was in rather a complaining mood at the time. She spoke freely of her trials; and Mrs. Felton strove to cheer her by pointing her to that God and Saviour who had kindly told her, in his word, to cast all her care upon him, assuring *her* that he cared for her.

"If I could only feel this to be true," said Mrs. Upton, "I should be glad; but God is a being I cannot see, and it is not easy to have faith without seeing its object."

"Can you not see his goodness in any event of your life?" asked Mrs. Felton. "Have you no blessings that came from his kind hand? Think, my dear friend."

"I have kind friends, to be sure; but it has never occured to me that our heavenly Father interested himself in my affairs, — I mean in little things that occur," answered the invalid.

"He notices the fall of the sparrow, and his provident care clothes the lilies of the valley," responded Mrs. Felton. "Then why should you doubt his care and faithfulness towards ourselves?"

"I have never thought much about serious things," replied Mrs. Upton. "I never used to have time; and, besides, I considered religion a gloomy theme, suited only to those who had no enjoyments of life."

"That is because you have been ignorant of its power to gild even the darkest hours of life," answered Mrs. Felton, with a smile, "as well as to heighten the enjoyment of our brightest moments. It does both for those that embrace it; and it gilds with more effulgent rays the pathway of the young, the joyous, and the happy. You have mistaken its nature, my friend, as all do who live unmindful of their Creator, their best and truest friend."

Dr. Stonely came in while his patient and Mrs. Felton were conversing, and the latter appealed to him to corroborate the truth of what she had said.

"Most gladly will I give my testimony in favor of that which has upborne my soul amid a pressure of trials such as have broken the spirits of many who leaned only on an arm of flesh."

As Dr. Stonely said this, he looked at Kate, who was regarding him with an approving smile; but, the moment she met his gaze, she blushed, and averted her face. The conversation soon became general, and Kate did not feel the embarrassment she had suffered on former occasions, when in the doctor's presence. When they parted, Mrs. Felton invited Dr. Stonely to call at Mr. Fielding's while she was there, telling him that it would be pleasant to her to talk over past events with him.

"I will do myself the pleasure," said he; "though I know not that my call would be agreeable to every one at your house."

"I don't think there is one to be found at that dwelling who will not welcome you," replied she.

"I hope," replied he, "that you are not mistaken in your judgment on this point; but for myself I fear it is otherwise."

Kate did not hear this last remark, as she was occupied at the moment in listening to Mrs. Upton, who, to Kate's great satisfaction, when she took her hand at parting asked if she had learned her name.

"I have not," replied Kate; "but I've been thinking you would tell it me all in good time, so I have not asked you."

"I ought to have told you before now, but I have not had courage to do so. Perhaps pride has kept me silent. I have not wished to be known, but since I became acquainted with you I have felt differently. My name is Upton; and I tell you now because I wish you to tell me if you have ever known any one who bore that name before."

Kate hesitated a moment before she replied. She then remarked that she had met with a person of that name a few times some years before.

"Have you ever thought that individual could be myself?" inquired Mrs. Upton.

"I have thought, from the first moment I beheld you," said Kate, "that you resembled that lady."

"And still," remarked the other quickly, "you did not say so out of regard to my feelings?"

"The only reason why I did not claim your acquaintance," responded Kate, "was because I felt that you shrank from being known."

"You judged rightly, and acted generously; but do you think Dr. Stonely ever thinks that he saw me before?"

"I believe he imagines he has seen a countenance somewhere that resembles your's very strongly, yet he is ignorant of your name."

"It has been unkind in me, I know, to keep him in ignorance of it while he has so generously attended me; but I have not had courage to tell him."

"Shall I inform him of it," asked Kate, "or do you prefer telling him yourself?"

"I would like you should make him acquainted with my name, and learn at the same time where he thinks he has seen me. I know that I have met with him before I saw him here; and well do I remember the time, and my feelings towards him."

Kate remembered too, full well; but she did not say so. Her mother was waiting for her, and she took her leave of Mrs. Upton, for whom she felt an increased interest each time she saw her.

As the trio walked home together, Kate related what Mrs. Upton had told her, and expressed a wish to know if Dr. Stonely remembered having seen her in the cars at the time alluded to.

"We shall see him at our present home soon," replied Mrs. Felton.

"How do you know that, mother?" inquired Kate.

"He told me he would come, though he thinks it doubtful if all there like his society," answered the other.

"I wonder who *dis*likes it," remarked Kate earnestly.

"No one, I believe," was Mrs. Felton's pleasant rejoinder.

Carrie scrutinized the countenance of her friend during this conversation, and fancied she saw in its expression something better than indifference, when her father was spoken of.

"I do so wish," said she mentally, "that Miss Felton and father could be partial to each other; but it's no use speaking out my wishes. Even if I could make a match it would not amount to much, for match-makers are not often prosperous; so I can do nothing but try to content myself with what may be. Oh, dear! I don't know how to have matters go on so."

"Carrie," said Kate, as she observed her musing mood, "can I have the benefit of your thoughts, or are they sacred to yourself."

"I hope I may dare tell them at some time; at present they would, I fear, frighten you if you knew them."

"I am not easily frightened, Carrie; still I shall not venture to intrude upon the sanctity of your private feelings. I shall miss you very much when I go home."

"And I, too, shall miss you very much indeed, Miss Kate; and I wish that your home was here," replied Carrie.

By this time the party had arrived at Mr. Fielding's, and Carrie readily accepted an invitation to spend the remainder of the day there with her friends. In the evening Dr. Stonely called, partly to accompany his daughter home, whom he expected was with Kate, but more than that to have an interview if possible with her friends. It was easier for both to talk on this occasion, because there was a subject of mutual interest to be discussed. Mrs. Felton introduced this topic soon after the

doctor came in, by telling him what Kate had related of Mrs. Upton. Kate then asked him if he remembered having seen her, and if so where they had met.

"I cannot now recall the circumstances under which I have seen her countenance, but I know that I have seen it somewhere before being called to visit her; and the impression made upon my mind by the rencontre was not pleasant."

"I think I can enlighten you upon the subject," said Kate.

"Indeed," answered the doctor: "please do, then; for I shall be glad to have my memory refreshed in regard to this impression."

"Do you remember the first time you ever saw my mother and myself?" asked she.

"I do," he said in a low tone, at the same time drawing his chair near her. "My memory has not been treacherous there."

Kate was not unmindful of these words, and they sounded pleasant to her; so, with an unaffected smile, she said, —

"You met Mrs. Upton and her eldest daughter in the cars, when you took that trip to Albany. We were all together then."

"I recollect her having been there now," replied the doctor, "though I had not thought of it for years."

Kate then reminded him of the conversation that was held by them during their interview while in the cars.

"I remember," he said, "that this lady at that time seemed very haughty, and looked down upon me, because my appearance did not denote wealth. I felt this; and I

felt, too, the difference between your mother, yourself, and the proud mortal near us. My spirits were depressed when I entered the cars; I felt the need of sympathy. Your kindness of manner towards my little Carrie and myself won my highest regard at that time, Miss Felton; and, if you will not deem it rudeness for me to affirm the fact, I will assure you that time has not changed my feelings."

Kate neither looked up nor replied to this declaration; and Dr. Stonely was for a few moments fearful that he had been too bold in thus addressing her. His fears, however, began to subside, as Kate soon controlled the mingled emotions that agitated her heart, and attempted to thank him for the honor he had conferred upon her; in which attempt she was interrupted by the approach of Mrs. Fielding, who came to ask Kate to sing.

In vain did she endeavor to excuse herself; not any excuse was accepted.

"You need not think, Kate," said her friend, playfully, "that I will allow you to sit moping here. You and Dr. Stonely are altogether too dull."

"You are mistaken," said the doctor.

No, I am not; so come along, Kate," she continued.

Kate, finding it useless to refuse any longer, rose.

Dr. Stonely arose at the same moment, and offered to attend her to the piano. His offer was accepted with evident satisfaction; while Mrs. Fielding, highly delighted at seeing these two friends on such good terms, walked beside Kate, and, as she seated herself at the instrument, whispered a word of approval, that caused the cheek of Kate to glow with crimson.

At the request of all present, she played and sang several lively airs and popular pieces; after which she paused and leaned her head upon her hand a moment, when Dr. Stonely, who had stood behind her while she had played, asked if she could sing the piece entitled, "Meet me in Heaven."

She nodded an affirmative, and immediately commenced playing that plaintive, but sweet air, accompanying the music with her voice. She sang and played with much feeling. Her performance was much applauded by all the company, and several voices urged her to repeat it. Kate would have declined doing so, had not Dr. Stonely requested, that, if not too weary, she would oblige her friends by performing that beautiful piece again.

"And do you like it so well?" she asked, playfully.

"I do indeed," was the rejoinder.

Not waiting to be urged further, she complied with his request; while each one present listened with charmed attention. When Kate arose from the piano, the doctor conducted her to a seat a little apart from the rest of the company, and seated himself beside her. He had hardly sat down, when the door-bell rang; and a servant, a moment after, brought a message for Dr. Stonely, requesting his immediate attendance upon an urgent case in another part of the city.

"I may hope to meet with you again, Miss Felton, may I not?" said he, as he hastily arose to obey the at that time unwelcome summons.

"Certainly you may," was Kate's instant reply.

The doctor said no more, but, bowing politely, took his leave. Mr. Fielding hastened toward the seat Dr. Stonely

had left vacant; but Kate, perceiving his intention, and knowing full well that he would rally her upon the attention his friend had shown her with little mercy, arose, and, without seeming to notice his approach, took refuge from his raillery by joining a group of elderly ladies that was at the moment surrounding her mother.

On looking around after she had seated herself, her eyes met those of Mr. Fielding, who laughed and shook his finger significantly at her, and then turned away. Kate knew too well then that that gentleman was reserving his fund of humor for her benefit the next morning at breakfast. She shrank from the idea of receiving it on that occasion, because Carrie was to spend the night with her, and would then be present to hear all that might be said. Carrie was as much delighted at her father's departure, as her friend and parent were disappointed.

"Do you know," said the lively girl, drawing near Kate as she spoke in a low tone, "that I am greatly obliged to that patient, whoever it is, for needing my father to-night, so that I can stay with you, Miss Kate?"

"I like to have you with me, Carrie," answered Kate: "but I cannot say that I am pleased with having your father called away so abruptly; for I had hoped he would have been able to spend the evening with us."

"With yourself, you had better say," remarked Mrs. Fielding, roguishly. That lady happened to be near at that moment, and, hearing what Kate had said, could not forego the privilege of teazing her a little.

"I declare, my dear Kate," she went on, "it is too bad to depend upon such uncertain company as that of a physician. I should not like one for a companion for life, should you?"

"Not having tried the experiment," replied Kate, "I do not know; perhaps I might like what you could not, as I am rather eccentric in some respects."

"Perhaps," said Mrs. Fielding, gaily, "you will commence experiments in that way at some time not far distant. I am sure I see the prospect of such a thing."

"It may be so," answered Kate, rather drily.

Carrie, who had heard this playful conversation, did not exactly understand its bearing; and, being ignorant of what had passed between Kate and her father, she inquired in the simplicity of her heart if there was any reason why the society of a doctor was not as desirable as that of any other person.

"On some accounts," replied Kate, "it is more so. One has so little of it, in the first place, that it is worth more; and then, as a general thing, physicians are intelligent, intellectual men, that most people like to converse with."

"Do you like doctors, Miss Kate?" asked Carrie.

"I like many that I have been acquainted with, but not all," was Kate's rejoinder.

"I hope my father is among the number you approve," said the affectionate child, at the same time putting her arm around her friend's waist; who, drawing her very near to herself, remarked in a tender tone, —

"He is, Carrie."

Kate, as she had anticipated, was rallied considerably by her host the next morning: goodnaturedly he spoke, it is true; but unwittingly he touched upon facts that brought the color to Kate's cheeks, and filled her eyes with tears, as he amused himself at her expense. Carrie saw that her dear Miss Kate could not act like herself, and

she pitied her; at the same time she told Mr. Fielding that she should inform her father of his naughtiness.

"If you do, Carrie," he retorted, "just tell me what your father says to it in reply."

"As you seem so very willing to have me tell him," said she, laughing, "I don't believe I had best do so, and I think I will not; but I am sure my father would not teaze Miss Felton as much, if she was his guest."

"I wish, Carrie," said Mrs. Fielding, "that Miss Felton may be his guest before many years."

"That's not a bad wish, my dear," said her husband.

"I think it is a very, *very* good wish," said Carrie. "I've wished so a great many times; but I should not be willing to have her go away ever, if she should once come to stay with us."

"I don't believe you would, dear," replied Mrs. Fielding. "We will keep on wishing," continued this lady, "and perhaps some day we shall have what we desire."

Dr. Stonely and Kate continued to meet at Mrs. Upton's. His knowledge of that lady's name and history increased the interest he had previously felt in her welfare. It is true he sometimes thought of her haughty bearing towards himself when they first met; but he remembered this only for a moment, and that passing thought inspired his heart with gratitude to that kind Father who had blest his efforts to overcome the obstacles that had sometimes well-nigh disheartened him. He was grateful that he was brought thus far on the road to usefulness and happiness. He regretted the misfortunes that had befallen his once wealthy patient; yet he ascribed nothing to chance, but all to infinite benevolence.

"It is God who putteth down one and exalteth another," he often said to his daughter, as she spoke of the change that had taken place in regard to Mina Upton and herself, since they first met. *She* was then a poor little lonely child; while Mina was the petted child of a wealthy, extravagant, aristocratic mother. Now Mina was contending with poverty, while *she* was surrounded with friends and affluence.

"Remember, my dear daughter," her father said to her one day, after returning from a visit to these afflicted ones, "that it is easy in God to change our condition in life. You are above want to-day, besides being beloved and respected. For this you should feel grateful to our heavenly Father, while you daily ask for a continuance of these blessings. Think how soon your condition might be changed. 'Riches take to themselves wings and fly away;' and God can easily withdraw from us his grace, so that we may do that which shall rob us of friends."

"I do often think of these things, father," answered Carrie; "and I pity Mina Upton, because she has lost her money: but she is gentle and good, and I love her. I wish to do more than I have done, father: I want to invite her to see me."

"Do so by all means, Carrie, if you wish to. I am very willing. Mina is a lovely child, and, under the influence of her good friend Miss Felton, is constantly improving. By-the-by, this lady has not done *you* any hurt, Carrie."

"I know that she has not," was Carrie's quick reply. "I wish I could be with her always; still I do not know what would be best."

"We none of us know that, my dear Carrie," answered

her father, as he imprinted upon her cheek a paternal kiss, and went out.

Carrie thought her father seemed in better spirits than he had for a long time; and, from what she had heard at Mr. Fielding's, she suspected there was beginning to be a pleasant understanding between Miss Felton and her almost idolized father; but she forbore to speak upon the subject to any one.

CHAPTER XXIII.

"Thou art the star that guides me
Along life's troubled sea;
Whatever ill betides me,
This heart shall turn to thee."

THE time had nearly passed that had been devoted to the stay of Mrs. Felton and Kate in New York. It was a matter of great regret, however, to most interested. Kate hated to confess, even to herself, that she was unwilling to return home; much more did she shrink from having her mother know the true state of her feelings. Susan, too, wished their stay might be prolonged, — not to mention Dr. Stonely, Carrie, Mrs. Upton, Mina, and the Fieldings. These last mentioned were very urgent to have another week, if no more, added to their visit. Kate said it should be as her mother wished; and, though that lady would for her own sake have chosen the quiet of her own dear home to the confusion of that great city, she yielded to the solicitations of her host and his lady, to which Carrie Stonely's were united, and consented to remain a few days longer. Susan had not been much with Kate, except in the presence of others, during her stay in New York. Her friends had seen her the object of admiration daily, and Mrs. Fielding had courted her company whenever Kate went out on visits of sympathy and kindness to Mrs. Upton. Susan remembered the Mrs. Upton she had seen in Virginia, and had expressed a wish to see the lady Kate was befriending; still, she had been

engaged whenever her friend had called upon her, and as yet had not seen her.

After Mrs. Felton had decided to prolong their stay for awhile, Susan one evening knocked at the door of Kate's room, to which her friend had gone immediately after tea. Kate had retired to read and compose her thoughts, preparatory to mingling with company that was expected on that night. She was wishing she might be long alone, when Susan's gentle rap interrupted her musings. On opening the door, she was greeted with an affectionate smile by Susan, who asked if she could have a private interview with her for a few minutes.

"Yes, certainly," was Kate's unselfish answer.

Her own wishes, as was her wont, were bade to wait, while another's were gratified.

"Kate," said Susan, "I have for some time been desirous of speaking with you upon the subject of Mr. Blake's attentions to me, yet have not had courage. I thought, too, our stay here was about at an end; but now I feel that I need your advice."

"Are his attentions disagreeable to you, Susan?" asked Kate, as the blushing girl paused and turned her face from the gaze of her friend.

"No, indeed, they are not, but far enough from it," answered Susan. "What troubles me is the thought that he knows nothing of my parentage; of course he considers me his equal."

"Are you not his equal, Susan?" asked her friend, smiling.

"Not in rank of parentage. What do you think he would say and do, if he should learn the truth respecting me?"

"I don't know, my dear girl," responded Kate; "but I believe would test his real character to be informed on the subject."

"I wish he might be told, and still I dread to have him know that my father is a poor-born white Southerner," said Susan sadly.

"If Mr. Blake loves you, Susan," answered Kate, "the knowledge of the fact will not change his feelings; but, if it is only your position in life he regards, you cannot too soon learn the truth, however unwelcome."

"I know all this; and yet," and she hesitated, "I cannot bear the thought of being lowered in his esteem."

"That is because you are attached to him, my dear girl. I hope he will prove worthy of your affection; but tell me, Susan, has Mr. Blake told you plainly that he wished you to become his wife?"

"Yes, some days since; and I did not scruple to confess that I regarded him with a feeling of preference that I felt for none other. But I told him that there were obstacles in the way of our union, and I dare not promise, even with the consent of my friends, to be his."

"Then this is the reason you have shrank from his attentions of late," remarked Kate. "Did you expect to alienate *your* affections from him by so doing, or were you intending to wean him from your society?"

"Neither, my more than sister," said the affectionate girl, laying her head upon the neck of her friend. "I am perplexed, and know not what to do."

Kate kissed her fondly.

"I am glad you confide in me, my dear," said this friend. "I hope you will soon be relieved from your

present perplexity. I think you had better acquaint Mr. Blake with your history. The sooner you do so, the sooner your suspense will be ended."

"But," said Susan, "if the certainty is painful as I fear, how can I ever endure it?"

"God will strengthen you for the conflict, my dear, dear girl. His grace is sufficient for every emergency, and you have his pledge that if you ask you will receive. Entreat him to grant you submission to his most perfect will, though he sees fit to try you in the furnace of affliction you so much fear. He is able, and can do this."

"Pray for me, Kate, my dear friend."

"Let us now kneel together before the mercy-seat of our heavenly Father," said Kate; and together they knelt while the latter poured out her soul in simple, earnest prayer for their mutual wants, with a feeling of child-like confidence in the wisdom, love, and goodness of a Being who holds all hearts in his hand, and controls the destiny of mortals. When they arose from their kneeling posture, Susan kissed her friend, and thanked her for her love and care. She then washed the traces of weeping from her face, and went down stairs with Kate. Their entrance to the drawing-room was greeted with exclamations of surprise at their late appearance.

Mr. Blake and Dr. Stonely were both present, and the latter playfully told Kate that he had been suspicious of her absenting herself to avoid meeting him.

"Had you any ground for such a suspicion?" asked Kate in a serious tone.

"I once thought that you shunned my society," answered he, in that tone which is ever expressive of affection, and *yet* undefinable.

For a moment Kate felt embarrassed; but, on finding this remark was unheard by all but herself, she smilingly replied, —

"You were mistaken then, doctor."

"I am happy to learn my mistake," said he; "and I would be happier still to know, if I might, that you would be satisfied with my company and care during life."

Kate was taken somewhat by surprise at this declaration. It seemed sudden, yet after a moment's reflection she knew it was not. She had known the doctor during years, although their acquaintance had not been intimate. She well knew, too, the state of her feelings towards him; and, after a brief silence on the part of each, she replied unaffectedly, —

"You *may* be happier, then, my friend."

The doctor's heart was too full to allow him to speak for an instant. He took the hand of Kate, and, pressing it affectionately, led her towards her mother, who was at the same time surrounded by several of the party. It was a moment of happiness to Kate, such as she had sometimes pictured in her imagination, but did not dare to believe would ever be hers.

Carrie came in late in the evening. She had been out with some friends, who wished her to call with them to Mr. Fielding's before she returned home. She did not expect to find her father there, and was delighted when she saw him sitting upon a sofa beside Kate, engaged in conversation with her and her mother, who sat near them. She approached them with a smile, and Kate moved in order to make room for Carrie beside her father.

"I don't wish to separate you two dear friends of

mine," said she in an almost whisper. "I hope I may never do such a thing," she continued in a still lower tone.

"I think," replied her father, "there is not much danger, while your attachment to us both is as great as it now is."

Carrie's only answer to this remark was a grateful smile. Her father was not summoned to attend a patient during that evening. This was a matter of rejoicing to his daughter, and surely not of regret to Kate, or any of the company, all of whom highly valued his society.

Mrs. Fielding congratulated him upon the circumstance. "Still," she said playfully, "I don't know that you would like to rest every evening, — should you, doctor?"

"It would not be unpleasant to me to do so," he replied. "Why should I not like it, think you, Mrs. Fielding?"

"I only thought it might not be quite as profitable when one is growing rich," replied the lady playfully.

Dr. Stonely regarded her with an amused expression for a few moments, and then said, —

"I did not think you considered me so mercenary in my feelings. Some of the pleasantest hours of my life have been those spent in laboring without expectation of ever receiving compensation."

"Perhaps that is often true; and yet doctors love money as well as most men," retorted Mrs. Fielding, wishing to draw out her medical friend as much as possible.

"Some physicians love to acquire riches even more than men ordinarily do," remarked Dr. Stonely; "yet, to the honor of the profession be it spoken, that taken as a class they are not selfish, covetous men."

"But don't familiarity with scenes and cases of suffering make many doctors hard-hearted?" asked Mrs. Fielding; and then, without waiting for a reply, continued, "I know this is true in one particular case at least, and I have sometimes thought this one heart was made of granite."

She paused, quite out of breath, but in a moment after said in a subdued tone, —

"I hope this one hard heart is growing softer now."

A few of the company understood the drift of these remarks; and all were amused at her playful manner. Even the doctor himself, the object of her good-natured raillery, was quite too happy to be annoyed by trifles. He believed that Mrs. Fielding would rejoice to know that her friend Kate had acknowledged her regard for him; and he wished she was even then advised of the fact, but this might not be. With hearts full of those deep and tenderly sacred emotions which none experience but once during life, both Kate and Dr. Stonely acted in such a manner that none of the company suspected what had passed between them.

Carrie saw that a brighter smile beamed upon the face of her loved Kate; and that her father seemed more like himself than he had for a long time; and thought more than she dared express.

Susan was too much occupied with her own troubles to notice her friend particularly; while Mrs. Felton's sympathies were all with that poor girl, and she could scarcely refrain from speaking to her in the fulness of her affectionate heart, to inquire why she was so thoughtful amid a cheerful circle. This kind lady, however, forebore, and contented herself with a mental promise that she would

learn, if possible, the cause of her anxiety before she slept that night.

Susan had resolved to acquaint Mr. Blake with all the circumstances connected with her life, before leaving the chamber of her benefactress. She mentally prayed, even while descending the stairs, for courage to do so; still, when she met the gentleman, and was treated by him with that respectful tenderness which ever characterized his manner towards her, her courage began to fail.

"How can I," thought she, "put such a comfort from me as his society by my own act? and yet I must not be unjust to him by deceiving him in regard to my relatives. That would illy requite his love."

Mr. Blake endeavored to dispel the shade of sadness that brooded over her handsome countenance; and once during the evening, as he found an opportunity to speak to her unheard by others, he implored her to tell him the cause of her disquietude. The tears flowed in an instant as he made this request. She could not keep them back, although she struggled hard to do so. He regarded her with an expression of sorrow, which she could not bear. She averted her face, and told him he should know all, if he only remained that night until after the rest of the party had left.

"If I cannot tell you myself," said she, "Miss Felton will say for me what I wish you to hear."

This was all she dare trust herself to say, for her heart was very full; and Mr. Blake was obliged to refrain from saying more to Susan on a subject that evidently gave her pain.

What could she wish to communicate to him? It puz-

zled him to conjecture. He endeavored to appear at ease before the company; still, his mind was tortured by various imaginings. He would not, he could not, for one instant entertain the thought that Susan had aught that was disgraceful to divulge of herself. He could not believe, either, that any friend would object to her marriage with himself; but, that there was something of a serious nature for him to be informed of, he judged from the evident distress of her who had become to him the dearest object on earth; and he longed for the moment to arrive when he should know the worst.

The evening seemed long indeed to Mr. Blake, though otherwise to Susan; for she thought that perhaps the moments then flying might be the last she should ever spend with him who was becoming dearer than ever to her heart, as she thought of their probable parting.

Time however, that silent, independent traveller, moved on, regardless alike of the wishes of all. The guests departed; and at an hour that could not be called late in the London of America, where she was, Susan found herself and Mr. Blake left by themselves in the drawing-room.

"Now, Susan," said he, approaching, and taking her hand as he sat down beside her, "tell me all that perplexes you."

"I wish I could," she answered; "but I cannot. I will, if you please, call Miss Felton, and we will get through this by me dreaded relation together."

"If you wish Miss Felton to take part in our conversation, call her by all means; only do not shrink from letting me know any thing that interests you. Remember that what concerns yourself concerns me also.

"May it be ever thus!" said Susan mentally, as she went to the room of her friend.

Kate had not retired, and very willingly accompanied Susan back to the drawing-room. She felt not in the least reluctant to lay before Mr. Blake the cause of her young friend's distress. When Susan and her friend returned to the room she had left, Mr. Blake was walking with an abstracted air, and did not at first notice their presence. They sat down upon a sofa, near which he was passing at the moment, and then he stopped before them. Kate looked into his sober face, and smiled.

"Miss Felton," he said, "I presume you are aware of my attachment to Susan."

"I am, sir," responded Kate.

"Do you object to her becoming my companion for life?"

"I do not, Mr. Blake; but have felt gratified at the thought of her reciprocating your feelings towards her."

"Then why does she feel unwilling to have me visit Rosefield, and tell me that there are obstacles in the way of our union? Your mother, I am sure, does not frown upon my attentions to her favorite."

"True, my mother does not disapprove of your partiality to Susan, Mr. Blake; and I will now tell you what obstacles oppose your union with our dear young friend. Perhaps *you* may consider them insurmountable," added Kate, with a smile; "yet it may be you will think they can be overcome."

Mr. Blake, gaining courage from the manner in which Kate spoke, eagerly asked her to tell him at once, and relieve his mind.

"Suppose I perplex you more by informing you, what then?"

"Why, I must bear it; that is all I can do."

"Well then," said Kate, "suppose that I tell you that you have become attached to a young lady who was born of poor parents; that this dear friend of yours has nothing to boast in regard to her parentage? All that constitutes her worth is concentrated in herself alone."

Kate looked at Mr. Blake as she said this, and he gave her an incredulous smile. She then glanced at Susan, and smiled herself. Susan did not perceive this, however; for she was gazing steadfastly upon the carpet. There was a short pause; at length Mr. Blake broke the silence.

"Have you nothing more to communicate, Miss Felton?"

"Nothing, sir; I have told you what Susan wished, yet dreaded you should know."

"Not quite all, Kate," said Susan timidly. "You have not told him that my parents were poor southern whites, or how degraded they once were."

"Poor southern whites," repeated Mr. Blake, as he seated himself by Susan, and took her hand. "So this is what you dreaded to have me know," continued he. "Did you suppose this knowledge would change my feelings towards you?"

"I thought it might give you pain to know that I was nobody, and yet you had thought of making me yours," said Susan.

Mr. Blake laughed heartily at this.

"My dear girl," said he, "it is for the qualities of your mind and heart that I love and value you. Your position has nothing to do with my attachment. Whatever your parentage and childhood might have been, I care not. These influences have not injured you. Had your parents

even belonged to that wretched locality, the Five Points, it would have mattered naught with me, as long as you were uncontaminated by its polluting influence. So just dismiss this subject from your mind, and never allow it to trouble you again."

"Let me give you my whole history first," said Susan; "it would be a comfort to me *now* to have you know all."

"Do so, then," replied Mr. Blake; "by all means."

Susan then related all she remembered of her early childhood, her first acquaintance with Kate, and all this dear friend had done for her. Kate then told him of their visit to the West, and their pleasant interview with Mr. Wilkins and his family; describing their present mode of living, and placing their present character before his view.

Mr. Blake listened to all this with a countenance beaming with satisfaction. When Kate had concluded, he said, —

"I am and always shall be under great obligations to you, Miss Felton, for giving me so good a wife. I feel that, under God, I owe my present happiness to yourself."

"I have simply done as I would that others should do by me," answered Kate; "and I feel that humility and gratitude become me before my heavenly Father, who has graciously smiled upon my efforts to do good. To him alone is gratitude due. I wish to say one word in relation to Susan before I leave you to-night," she added; "and that is, that perhaps it will not be best to acquaint the world with her history. It is well for him who is to become her husband to know it, but not others. All will not view the subject alike; and it is not necessary that the idle curiosity of any should be indulged."

"It certainly is not," replied Mr. Blake; "and I hope

Susan will be satisfied with having told me the circumstances connected with her life. These need not be common property; still, I would not feel disgraced by their being known."

Kate now bade these friends good-night, and left them with a heart buoyant with happiness, yet overflowing with gratitude to Him who had done for her even more than she had ever ventured to ask. Her childlike confidence in his tender, faithful care and love was strengthened; and she fell asleep on that night with her heart filled with joy, such as the selfish and God-forgetting never know.

CHAPTER XXIV.

"There are moments in life that can ne'er be forgot,
Which brighten and brighten as time steals away:
They give a new charm to the happiest lot,
And they shine on the gloom of the loveliest day."

Mrs. Felton retired to rest, on the evening she had desired an interview with Susan, perfectly satisfied that Kate, whom she knew had been requested to join Mr. Blake and her *protégé* below, would learn what she had so much desired to be informed of. She fell asleep before her daughter returned to her chamber; and slept so soundly that she scarcely realized her having retired, until she awoke at an early hour on the following morning.

Mrs. Felton perceived that her daughter was sleeping, and forbore to speak. Still she was almost impatient to do so; and when, after the lapse of some fifteen minutes, Kate opened her eyes and bade her mother good-morning, that lady, after hastily returning the salutation, immediately inquired respecting the interview of the night previous.

"Did you learn the exact state of affairs in regard to our dear girl, Kate?" she asked.

"I did, mother," was Kate's cheerful reply.

"Inferring from your tone, daughter, I judge the shadow has flitted by that has of late darkened Susan's mind. Is it so?"

"Yes, mother," responded Kate; "and the sun of prosperity at its meridian seems at this hour to be illuminating her prospects."

"What could have weighed so heavily upon the dear child's mind, do you think? It is very evident something has perplexed her."

"She has been very much troubled, of late, because Mr. Blake did not know her parentage was low. She desired him to be informed of her history; and yet, poor thing! she feared that a knowledge of the circumstances connected with it would change his feelings towards herself."

"Susan sought counsel of me," continued Kate; "and I advised her to tell him at once, and abide the consequences. Upon trial, she found herself inadequate to the task, and last night, as you know, requested me to do it for her."

"No, Kate: I did not know, until now, that Susan desired you to go down to state facts. I conjectured that it was to listen to something that Mr. Blake wished to say to you."

"Do you not think, mother, that it was well for him to know every thing of interest relating to Susan, before she consented to be his for life?"

"Certainly I do. I am very glad he knows all now. If he loves Susan as one ought to love a wife, he will love her independent of her parentage."

"He does, mother. I am sure of that. You would have admired him, had you seen him when I told him who Susan really was."

"I hope his relatives will not frown upon the sensitive girl when they learn that she is an adopted child," said Mrs. Felton.

"I trust that they will not," replied Kate. "They never

need know that her parents once belonged to that despised and degraded class known as poor southern whites. It will be enough that they are informed of the present position and whereabouts of her family. Of that I am sure they need not be ashamed."

"So am I," answered her mother.

A gentle knock at the door told them that she who had been the theme of conversation sought admittance. As Kate opened the door, Susan bade her good-morning. while a bright smile played upon her handsome features, She approached Mrs. Felton, and, kissing her affectionately, exclaimed, —

"Oh, I feel almost too happy! I cannot express my feelings as I wish. Only think! Mr. Blake knows all that is degrading about me, and he does not mind it; at least he does not love me less for having been once a poor neglected child."

"Had Mr. Blake received the intelligence communicated to him last night in a different spirit, I should have felt surprised," remarked Mrs. Felton. "Besides, I should have been unwilling to have entrusted your happiness to his keeping."

"He is just the noble, generous being we have ever thought him," said Kate. "I presume he will never allude to the subject we discussed last evening in a manner that can possibly wound your feelings. I rejoice most sincerely, Susan, in your present happiness and future prospects."

"So do I," said Mrs. Felton. "But, Kate, how is it with your own affairs? I thought something pleasant must have occurred last evening. Your countenance told me a pleasant story."

"It must have done so, mother, if it was a true index to my heart; for that was light. I think I laid myself down to rest last night feeling happier than ever before."

"I suppose I hardly need ask if Dr. Stonely and yourself have now a pleasant understanding," said her mother.

"Hardly," said Kate, with a smile and becoming blush.

"So I may expect to lose both my dear girls at once, may I?"

"No, mother, you are not to lose me," responded Kate. "I shall never leave you alone; I could not be happy away from you."

At that moment the bell announced that breakfast was ready; and Mrs. Felton, with her eyes brimful of tears, kissed her daughter affectionately as they left the chamber together, and sought the breakfast-room.

"What smiling faces!" exclaimed Mr. Fielding, as he looked about him, after having implored a blessing upon the repast to which the family had sat down. "There are two kinds of sunshine here this morning. I wonder what it is that has driven the clouds away from the sky of these ladies. Do you know anything that makes them peculiarly happy, Mrs. Felton?" inquired he of that lady.

"I can think of various reasons why they should be happy," replied Mrs. Felton.

"But is there not one greater than all the others? I suspect as much, and did last night. Now do be candid, Kate, and own that you and Dr. Stonely are" —

"The best of good friends," interrupted Kate.

"Friends for life, too, I presume," responded the other.

"I hope so, certainly," was the playful rejoinder.

"But now, in sober earnest, I wish you to answer this question," said Mrs. Fielding: "Is not Dr. Stonely more to you than a common friend?"

"I cannot say that he is not," answered Kate, "neither do I wish to say that he is."

"You are a good, frank-hearted girl," said Mr. Fielding to Kate, "worth a half-a-dozen of such as pretend to be shocked at the idea of matrimony, until after the marriage ceremony has been performed. You are just the girl for me, Kate."

"No, no!" said Susan, laughing. "You mean just the girl for the doctor. I think they are exactly suited to each other. I am rejoiced to learn that at length there exists a favorable understanding between those long-opposing parties."

"Take care," said Kate, "how you say 'at length.' How do you know we have not understood each other during all our acquaintance?"

"If I don't know, certainly I can conjecture; and my conjectures are often correct. I think they are in this instance."

"So do I, Susan," remarked Mr. Fielding. "I believe they have been afraid of each other for years. They have acted so, have they not, Mrs. Felton?"

"I cannot say but that they have," replied that lady; "and I could hardly understand them myself," added she. "Still I have ever hoped that all this coldness would at last result pleasantly."

"It is likely to, I think," said Mrs. Fielding; "at least I cannot conceive of any thing more agreeable to all parties interested, than the life-union of Dr. Stonely and our dear friend Kate."

"Unless it be the same kind of partnership formed between S. Blake, Esq., and our own loved Susan."

Kate listened with a quiet smile to all that was said, at the same time eating her breakfast. Susan strove to follow her example, and this pleasant chat at length was ended. The different parties went to attend to their different duties. Mrs. Fielding and Susan busied themselves at home, while Mrs. Felton and Kate took an early walk to the dwelling of Mrs. Upton. They found that lady more comfortable and in better spirits than Kate had ever before seen her. She welcomed them cordially, and conversed cheerfully of the prospect of returning health.

"I think," said Mrs. Felton, "that a change of air and scene might benefit you very much, Mrs. Upton."

"Dr. Stonely thinks I ought to go into the country for a season," replied she rather sadly; "but I cannot think of such a thing. I would be glad to, however. In a few days I shall be able to earn something more with my needle. I long to work again."

"But you are not fit to apply yourself to sewing or any thing else yet. You must rest and recruit," said Kate.

"Certainly," replied her mother. "I have been devising a little plan for your good, and I hope it will please you, my friend. I've been laying a plan for you to leave New York, for the present at least, and remove to a pretty little place near Rosefield. There you can, I am sure, establish yourself as a teacher of music, drawing, and other kinds of fancy work. I know of several families in that vicinity who would gladly employ a teacher near home. So I can be responsible for your success, — that is, if you approve my plan."

"I do most heartily approve it, and would rejoice to go to that place if I only had the means to remove there, but I have not. I am poor; only think, I have never been able to pay Dr. Stonely any thing for his services."

"He does not intend to take any thing from you in pay," said Kate.

"He is a good, generous, noble-hearted man, I know," replied the other; "and I wish I could pay him."

"You may," said Mrs. Felton, "by profiting by his kindness, and doing all you can to regain health."

"I wish all doctors were like Dr. Stonely," remarked Mrs. Upton, musingly. "Have you ever seen that physician who travelled in the cars with us at the time we first met?" she asked. "I have often thought of him. I was proud then, and did not appreciate that gentleman's position," added she.

"Yes, we have all seen him, and I trust you appreciate his present position. Dr. Stonely and this threadbare-coated gentleman are one," said Mrs. Felton.

Mrs. Upton betrayed much emotion on hearing this.

"Have you not sometimes suspected as much?" asked Kate.

"I have sometimes thought the expression of Dr. Stonely's countenance resembled that of the gentleman I then saw; but I never believed them one. I did not care to, either," was Mrs. Upton's reply.

"You wouldn't have respected him less on that account, would you?" inquired Mrs. Felton.

"Indeed I would not, but, on the contrary, esteem him more highly. I feel now that I can hardly do justice to the magnanimity of his acts towards myself. Did he

know that I was the individual he had seen under such different circumstances?"

"He did not at first know who you are, but thought he had met with you somewhere. I told him not long since."

"What did he say?" asked Mrs. Upton.

"He expressed regret at your misfortunes, and said his interest in your welfare would be increased by a knowledge of the fact," answered Kate.

"What a dear good man he must be! A Christian, he is, without doubt," said Mrs. Upton.

"I trust so," was Kate's reply; "but we have wandered from the subject mother just now introduced. To return to it: I will ask you to allow us the pleasure of defraying your expenses to Rosefield. If at any future day you are able to refund the money, you may do so; but, if not, you will be welcome to it always."

Mrs. Upton was overcome with emotion; mingled feelings agitated her breast for a time, and Mrs. Felton and Kate sat silently regarding her with affectionate interest the while.

In a few minutes, gratitude and a desire to benefit her children triumphed over the baser feelings of pride and hatred of obligation; and she gratefully accepted the generous offer of the friends Providence had kindly sent in her hour of extremity.

"I am overwhelmed," said she, "with obligations already; but I cannot refuse to receive more at your hands. It will be my wish, as well as earnest endeavor, to repay your kindness, at least in some small degree. I trust I shall be able to do this; if not, I hope Heaven will reward you."

"We are compensated already," remarked Mrs. Felton. "Your willingness to allow us to assist you is reward enough; so do not trouble yourself about obligation, but think about changing your condition as soon as it will be consistent for you to travel."

Dr. Stonely, upon being consulted, thought it best, if possible, for his patient to be moved before cold weather arrived. He heartily approved of the plan suggested by Mrs. Felton, and told Mrs. Upton if she located herself near Rosefield she would probably see him occasionally, as he expected to visit that region sometimes.

"I shall always be happy to see you, doctor, in any place where I may go or be; but I should hardly think you could ever desire to behold one like myself."

"Why not?" inquired he, hastily, regarding her with surprise. "I do not know any reason why I should not like to meet you again."

"Have you forgotten the time we first met?" asked the lady in an humble tone.

"We met in a travelling-car, I remember."

"Yes," said Mrs. Upton; "and how haughty and disdainful I felt towards you! I was rich then, and foolishly believed I was better than those who could boast but little of this world's goods. I did not then realize that there exists an aristocracy of genius, intellect, and morality, as well as that of wealth. I should have been highly offended if any one had spoken of you then as my equal; but I now see that in every sense you were my superior."

"Don't let us talk any more of this," said the doctor. "We are all erring mortals, dependent constantly upon the forbearance of our heavenly Father for forgiveness;

therefore we are under obligations to pity the foibles of our fellow-beings, while we strive to love them, and do good to them in every possible way. You have never injured me, Mrs. Upton; though when first we met you were ignorant of some phases of life, such as only one can understand who is called to pass through trials such as you had not then tasted. It is pleasant to know, however, that your Father's discipline has taught you that you were then mistaken on many points. I think, that, in respect to your afflictions, one may say with the poet, that, —

'Afflictions, though they seemed severe,
Were kindly sent to bless.'"

"Yes, truly may this be said," responded Mrs. Upton earnestly.

Mina Upton was overjoyed at the idea of going to Rosefield. She had dreaded the arrival of the time when Kate would leave New York; but, if she could only live within a few miles of her at a future day, she should not mind the separation as much. The youngest children of Mrs. Upton, too, were delighted with the thought of living where they could see Miss Felton; for they had learned to love her long before. Mrs. Felton and Kate united in proposing to take Mrs. Upton along with them on their homeward journey.

"What will Mina do, if I leave her?" asked the lady.

"We don't expect you to leave her," said Mrs. Felton. "All your children can go now, as well as by-and-by. They can be made comfortable, I doubt not, until we find a house for you; so do not perplex yourself about the matter, — we will do all for you."

"I never, never can repay such kindness as yours, my friends," said Mrs. Upton, with deep feeling.

"Don't trouble your mind with thoughts like those," replied Mrs. Felton. "Neither worry at all in regard to making preparations for your removal, for you will need all your little strength to perform the journey."

It was even so. Mrs. Upton was too feeble to exert herself without hazard to her health. Kate provided help for Mina, and attended to the fitting of the children for the trip; and her kindness converted this little sober dwelling into a scene of merry bustle. Bright little faces beamed upon Kate whenever she looked in to see how they were progressing in their movements; while the grateful, affectionate smile of Mina, as she went from one thing to another, arranging matters to her own satisfaction, told plainer than language could have done that they were happy.

Mrs. Upton shared this happiness. It was of a contagious nature, and did not abate, but rather increased daily, until they all went on board the steamer that took them to Albany.

The joy of the little ones was unbounded when they saw Mrs. Felton, Kate, and Susan, in the saloon of the boat.

"Oh, how delightful to go with you all!" said they both, in one breath.

"It is indeed a pleasure we could hardly have expected," answered their mother. "Certainly one that *I* did not deserve."

They had a pleasant trip to Albany. The weather was fine, although the air was rather cool. To Mrs. Upton it was gratefully invigorating. She enjoyed the excursion greatly. When they took the cars at Albany, for Rose-

field, memory's finger pointed Mrs. Upton to the time she had travelled that road before. It is true, that, on the former occasion, they were moving in an opposite direction, and two of the company were missing now who before were with them; yet there was enough to bring the past in bold review before the mind's eye of her, who, since that period, had become so changed.

"Are you feeling more unwell?" asked Kate of Mrs. Upton.

"Oh no!" replied the lady. "But I was almost lost to the present in thoughts of the past. It was, I believe, in this very same car that you and I first met each other. I was just now thinking, that, at that time of my life, I knew little of happiness."

"Do you now," inquired Mrs. Felton, "realize more what happiness is?"

"I think I do. Yes, I am sure that I am far happier at this moment, in my poverty, than I then was, surrounded by all the glitter of wealth. Then I forgot my heavenly Father, and fancied myself independent of his providential care. 'So foolish was I, and ignorant,' as the Psalmist says, 'I was as a beast before God;' and, I may add, 'he has holden me with his right hand.' I thank him for having brought me to see things differently, even though he has been obliged to afflict me in order to convince me of my sins."

"I hope, Mrs. Upton," said Kate, "that your last days may abound with comfort, — in temporal things as well as in those the world knows not of."

Our little party enjoyed much pleasant conversation a t those intervals when the locomotive permitted them to

hear each other's voice; and the trip, though long, did not seem tedious to them. They were glad, however, to get a glimpse of Rosefield, as they drew near the end of their journey.

Good old Maggie had been apprised of the fact that her mistress expected to bring company; therefore every thing was in readiness for the accommodation of even a greater number than arrived on the evening of the day upon which the old housekeeper expected them.

"We've come to bring you plenty of work, Maggie," said Kate in answer to an assurance of the faithful woman that she was delighted to see her friends, company and all.

"Never think of the work, Miss Kate; you've been gone so long that my poor old eyes fairly ached to see you. I would ask if you have enjoyed your visits, only you look so well and happy that I needn't."

"I am both happy and well," replied Kate; "besides, I have enjoyed more during my absence than I ever have before, while away from this dear old home."

"Are these visitors some new acquaintances of yours, Miss Kate?" asked Maggie.

"No, not very new," replied Kate. "I have known them some years."

"They haven't been here before as I remember," said the other.

"No, Maggie, they have never been here before," was the answer, as she left the room to follow her mother and Mrs. Upton up stairs.

"Tea will very soon be ready," said the housekeeper, as the young lady ascended the stairs.

It was but a little while before all the happy little

party was assembled around the supper-table. The travellers were somewhat weary, yet their fatigue was well-nigh forgotten on this cheerful occasion. Every face wore a smile of sweet content, while the pleasure of old Maggie was too great to be quiet. She was obliged to manifest it by sundry exclamations of joy, such as, —

"It does seem so good to have you all at home again. I can't express my happiness, indeed I can't. You've been so far away, and then come in safety, so well and happy, home again. I am rejoiced at it. Shall you stay at home next winter, think ye, or will I have to spare you again? I can't help thinking of that, if I am happy."

"We don't know yet, Maggie," replied Mrs. Felton, "where we shall spend the winter. I hope we can stay at home, but it is an uncertain matter now. There is some news," she added, "for you to hear by-and-by; pleasant news to be sure, but it may not make you glad at first."

"Oh dear!" said the good woman with a sigh, "I hope the young ladies are not going to be carried off by husbands yet a while; I hope this isn't what I've got to hear."

"You would like no news better than such as that, would you, Maggie?" asked Mrs. Felton, playfully.

"To be sure I would," replied the good soul; "and yet I know that I have no right to expect any thing different. I know well enough that Miss Kate won't get married unless she thinks it her duty. Let her be ever so much attached to a gentleman, she would think of the matter long before she decided to change her name; so I

suppose I oughtn't to fret about it, but submit like a Christian."

"Suppose, Maggie, I should change my name, and yet not leave you. How would that suit you?"

"I should like it, if the name you took was as good as your own. It can't be no better, if I do say it."

"I shall not take a name that is not honorable enough to reflect credit upon the memory of my father, Maggie. That will do, I suppose, will it not?"

"Oh yes, indeed, Miss Kate! I'll trust you any where."

"Except in a distant home," said Kate with a playful smile, interrupting the loquacious woman.

"But is it really so; is Miss Kate a going to be married?" asked Maggie of Mrs. Felton.

"Yes," answered Mrs. Felton; "it is true that she will be united to a gentleman that you will some time love as well as you now love my daughter."

"Susan, too, is thinking of changing her condition by-and-by."

"Well, changes must come," said Maggie, thoughtfully; "but do tell me the names of these gentlemen, Mrs. Felton. I suppose the young ladies are willing I should know them."

"Certainly we are," said Kate, speaking for Susan as well as herself. "Mr. Blake is the name of one, and the other is Dr. Stonely."

"You are to be the doctor's bride, I reckon?" said Maggie, addressing Kate.

"Why do you think so?" asked Kate.

"Because you're just fit for a good doctor's wife this

minute, and every body knows it that knows ye. Susan," added she, "is a good young lady, but she's not had experience, as you have, Miss Kate."

"Well, I'll have the doctor, then," replied Kate, laughing, "and let Susan become Mrs. Blake; but these changes are not to take place right away. We shall be together for some time yet."

"That is a comfort," said Maggie with some emphasis; at the same time raising Kate's hand to her lips affectionately, as that young lady arose and left the table near which this faithful creature was standing. Tears filled the eyes of Kate at this expression of attachment from one who had watched over her feeble steps in infancy, and ministered to her wants in riper years.

"How blest I am!" thought Kate as she accompanied their invalid guest to her chamber. "Loving ones surround me on every hand. Was ever the cup of a mortal more full of happiness than mine?"

Kate's beaming countenance told plainly that she was happy. Mrs. Upton only waited to be alone with her to tell her how thankful she felt that Dr. Stonely's interest and hers were to be one.

"I understand now why the doctor is to be often in this vicinity," said the lady. "When he told me this, I was a little surprised; but I have been so much occupied with my own affairs since then, that I had not guessed the reason. The conversation at supper enlightened me, and it also gladdened my heart. I do not deserve *your* friendship, much less the doctor's. Yet I feel that it is among the greatest blessings of my life."

"We are happy in being your friends," remarked Kate.

"I can speak for Dr. Stonely as well as myself; for I know that it has given him great pleasure to oblige you."

"A friend in need, I thought once, could never be mine; but now I realize the benefit of such a one," said Mrs. Upton. "I am only too happy in enjoying your liberal hospitality to-night."

CHAPTER XXV.

"Never so truly happy.
I know myself now, and I feel within me
A peace above all earthly dignities, —
A still and quiet conscience." *Shakespeare.*

Mrs. Upton was urged to remain a few days at Mrs. Felton's quiet home with her children. Mina was not in perfect health, — her energies had been overtaxed, and she needed rest; besides, the change and absence of care were grateful to one who had endured much both mentally and physically, as had Mrs. Upton. She was thankful for the invitation to remain with these friends for a while. The obligations they had laid her under were *great*, but not onerous; for their kindness had ever been so unobtrusive in its character towards her, that she could scarcely realize that herself was the obliged party.

Kate and Susan soon began to look about for a suitable dwelling for the widow and her fatherless children. They found a neat cottage house, pleasantly situated, about two miles distant from their own home. Its surroundings were pretty. The house was white, its windows were shaded with green blinds; while a luxuriant woodbine climbed proudly over the whole of its front, and then crept lovingly along its side. At this season, the bright berries that hung from the vine enhanced its beauty, and invited travellers oftentimes to pause and gaze upon it with an admiring eye.

This was not, however, the principal attraction of this little spot; for roses, honeysuckle, and sweetbrier, in

their season, lent their aid to allure the child of taste thither. A vegetable garden; small orchard; and a little corner that gloried in its wealth of grape-vines, now laden with rich fruit; and currants and raspberries in their season, — composed the external attractions of the place.

Within, there were two pleasant parlors, a dining-room, and kitchen, besides one bed-room, all upon the first floor. Kate wisely thought this house would be exactly suited to the convenience of Mrs. Upton. That lady, as Kate told Susan, could devote the back parlor to the use of her pupils, which she was sure she could obtain; while the other rooms were well calculated for the comfort of her family, as there were nice chambers for lodging. She did not lease it, however, without consulting Mrs. Upton; but she engaged the services of a good woman, who was out of employ, and who was willing to become maid-of-all-work to this acquaintance of Mrs. Felton and Kate.

"I'll work for any one that you care about," said the woman, "or for your mother and yourself. I've not forgotten your kindness to my poor father and mother in their last sickness."

Kate thanked her humble friend, and told her something of the history of her with whom she was to live.

"I know," said Kate, "that you, Rachel, will not look for perfection, and will not allow the occasional indulgence of a fretful spirit to spoil your peace. This lady," she continued, "is feeble in body, and she feels the change in her condition; yet strives, I think, to be patient under trial, and thankful for the mercies she enjoys. At times, however, she tests the patience and forbearance of those around her; and she certainly has a claim upon the sym-

pathy of us all. You may assist her much, though indirectly, in her struggles with her own heart. Her daughter Mina will be a sunbeam to dispel the transient gloominess of your way here, while her little brother and sister will unite with this lovely girl in the good work.

"You know now just what to expect, and you need this knowledge to qualify you fully for the situation you are to fill."

Rachel, it would seem, was made for the purpose of living with such a person as Mrs. Upton. So Kate thought. She had long known her, and she had determined before leaving New York to engage her, if possible, as housekeeper for her unfortunate friend. This lady's unfitness to guide her own domestic affairs was well known to Kate. She was also aware that Mina's health was suffering from her too great efforts to do that which she knew not how to accomplish. Perplexity and anxiety were, as they ever are in such cases, more wearing to her than labor.

Kate had no idea of placing an obstacle in the way of Mina's domestic education, for she felt this would be wrong. She wished her to be in a condition to assist to lighten the burdens of others. Mrs. Upton was wofully ignorant in this respect. She had in her girlhood foolishly considered labor degrading; indeed, she advocated the same ridiculous theory in womanhood, and scorned doing any thing for herself that a servant could do for her. When poverty first came upon her "like a strong man armed," as she often said, she fretted at her circumstances, without regretting her unfitness to meet them.

Her daughter, however, felt deeply the defect in her mother's education, as well as her own. She saw plainly

that their misfortunes would have been lighter, but for this want of practical knowledge in housekeeping; and she strove to convince her mother of the fact. A cook-book is well enough, and often essential, in the hands of those who have experience and judgment to aid them; but it is oftener an extravagent agent in the hands of those who are untaught and unpractised.

Mina had learned this by her own trying experience. She hailed the short respite she was now enjoying with delight, and would not let thoughts of future perplexities greatly mar her comfort. Yet she dreaded — and who can wonder? — her return to those household cares for which she well knew she was entirely unprepared.

Kate and Susan were not absent but an hour or two from home, at the time they obtained a refusal of the house for Mrs. Upton, and secured the services of Rachel. Their friends knew they had been out on business, as on their return they brought home some little articles they had purchased. Kate it best for Mrs. Upton to continue their guest for a season, as she seemed to enjoy her visit; besides, Mina was a favorite with all in the house, and they loved to have her there. Mina, too, loved to be near those she loved so well; and she had another motive that influenced her in wishing to prolong her stay at Mrs. Felton's, — she could go into the kitchen sometimes, and notice the servants when they were at work. The cook was a good-natured woman, and willingly answered any questions asked by Mina in regard to the art of bread-making, boiling rice, and many other matters relating to simple cooking. The poor girl hailed this as a long-wished-for opportunity to learn what she had long greatly desired to know.

When the ladies returned from their business excursion, they missed Mina from the little circle that was gathered in the sitting-room, and inquired for her. Maggie heard their inquiries, and, with a smile of good humour and satisfaction on her ever-pleasant countenance, begged the privilege of conducting the young ladies to the place where she had lately seen her busily engaged.

"What is she engaged in?" asked Kate, with a feeling of curiosity.

"Please come and see for yourself," replied Maggie, as she led the way to the kitchen.

There they saw Mina anxiously watching the cook, who was making pastry. She looked up as her friends approached the table at which she was stationed, and smilingly remarked to them that she was taking lessons in cooking.

"You need not at present," said Kate; "you should rest while you are here. It will be time enough to begin to trouble yourself about domestic affairs when your mother gets to housekeeping again."

"But, Miss Felton," replied Mina, "you don't know how hard it is to try to do what one has never seen done, or been learned to do. I have shed a great many tears over my ignorance," she continued, "and I am thankful to be taught anything that will be of use to one in keeping house. I wish my mother had only learned something of the art, so that she could now teach me."

"You are to have a teacher, my dear girl," said Kate, "when you go to your new home. I have engaged a woman to live with your mother, who is an excellent housekeeper. From her you may obtain much knowledge that

will be useful to you, not only in regard to domestic affairs, but of other things. This woman is a Christian too, and has had much experience that has qualified her for usefulness, particularly in a family like your mother's."

"How very, very kind of you think of this!" said Mina, eagerly. "I have suffered so much from the ignorance of both my mother and myself in regard to these things, that the prospect of being relieved from the perplexity quite delights me."

Kate then told Mina of the house she had seen; and it was agreed that she should go, towards evening, and look at it.

"We will ride over," remarked Kate, "and show the place to you, before you say anything to your mother about it."

"You are too good to us," was Mina's grave rejoinder.

"As if that could be so," replied Kate, laughing, as she left the kitchen.

Mina never forgot the lesson she took on that morning. She learned thoroughly the art of making pie-crust, — a skill in which too many are deficient, deplorably so for the health or comfort of those who depend upon their efforts in this department of cooking. It was with mingled feelings of gratitude and delight, that Mina went through the pleasant house Kate had selected for her home.

"What a lovely place!" said she, as she gazed upon its beautiful belongings and surroundings. "Why, if we come here to live, we shall forget that we have ever been poor. I hope Carrie Stonely will come here to see me sometimes."

"She will, I dare say," answered Kate.

"It will be even more pleasant here in the spring," remarked Susan.

"Not *more* beautiful," replied Mina; "only the beauty of the spring will be of another kind. I admire the dark, rich colors of autumn very much; their language is to me significantly lovely."

"I hope your mother will like this place," said Kate; because it is nearer to us than any house we can find."

"I know she will," responded Mina and Susan, in one breath.

"She cannot help liking it, I am sure," said Mina.

It proved even so. In a day or two after this conversation, Mrs. Upton, having entirely recovered from the effect of travelling, visited the cottage; and, to the inexpressible delight of her children, declared it seemed to her like a little paradise on earth.

"We can take comfort here, can we not, mother?" asked Mina.

"I hope we shall," was her mother's encouraging reply.

All were busy now for a few days, and pleasantly too, in making preparations for the removal of Mrs. Upton to her new abode. Rachel was presented to her new mistress, who was not only astonished, but very grateful, to find her greatest want so kindly supplied.

"We shall find it pleasant to keep house now," said she to her daughter; "for we shall be freed from that onerous care we felt so wearing when we were in New York. I think the anxiety of trying to keep house helped to bring on my illness," added she, addressing her friends.

"I presume that it had much to do with it," answered Mrs. Felton. "It could not be otherwise."

"To avoid a repetition of this evil," said Kate, "I hope you will be willing your daughters should be taught every thing that it is necessary a good housekeeper should know. Such knowledge will not unfit them for any circle in society, while a want of it sometimes is the cause of much misery."

"I have realized what a want of this knowledge can make a family suffer too fully to fail of profiting by the experience," remarked Mrs. Upton; "at least, I trust I have."

"So have I," exclaimed Mina. "I have seen the time that I should have been grateful to become the pupil of the freshest daughter of Erin I ever beheld, who could tell me any thing in regard to domestic duties."

"Experience I have found an expensive teacher. I certainly ought to profit by its teachings," remarked Mrs. Upton, rather sadly.

"We all have realized this in a greater or less degree," said her kind hostess. "We are slow to profit by the experience of others, but are very apt to believe things will do better with us; until we have tried for ourselves, we are not always satisfied. This makes part of life's discipline."

"A rough part, too, I think," was Mrs. Upton's rejoinder.

It was not long before every thing was in readiness for the ladies' removal. The house was furnished, if not elegantly, very prettily; and every thing about it was suggestive of comfort. Mrs. Felton had arranged matters so that they might have something of a "house-warming" when the family took possession of the premises. Conse-

quently, all their friends either accompanied them, or followed soon after to "the dear little cottage home," as Mina termed their rented domicil. Rachel presided at supper on that occasion, and the day closed pleasantly to all parties. Both givers and receivers enjoyed the privilege granted them by their heavenly Father. If one party realized that it was blessed to give of the bounties that had been bestowed upon them, the other confessed that it was sweet to partake of the benefits conferred through the medium of loved friends by a Father's hand.

Mrs. Upton soon commenced giving lessons in music and drawing; the number of her pupils increased almost daily, until she had as many as she could possibly instruct. The housekeeping department was well cared for by Rachel and Mina. The latter spent some time every day to learn this most important of things, — the way to make a household comfortable.

Carrie Stonely visited Rosefield, and spent several days with Mina, before she returned to New York. Her father contrived to leave his business for a day or two, in order to gratify his wishes in seeing Kate, as well as in accompanying Carrie home. His visit to Rosefield, short as it was, produced a great sensation; the news that he had come to visit Miss Felton spread rapidly throughout the place. All rejoiced to have Kate beloved by a worthy object, and yet there were none that did not dread the thought of her removal from Rosefield.

Carrie Stonely was among the happiest of the happy, when she was informed by her father, after leaving Rosefield, that he expected Kate to accompany them back, after becoming her second mother, the next time they visited that place.

"I hope," said Carrie, "that you will go again soon, father."

"Not before March," he replied. "You can correspond with Miss Felton frequently until then; this will make the time pass pleasantly to you."

"Shall you write to her, too?" asked Carrie.

"To be sure I shall," answered the doctor.

"Then you will have to write when every one else is sleeping," said Carrie.

"Sometimes I suppose I shall," answered her father, smiling; "but I hope I shall get time to read the answers to my missives in the day-time."

Mr. Blake also made one of the guests at Rosefield during the bird-like stay of Dr. Stonely. It was a pleasant gathering in the dear, cosy little sitting-room, on the evening before the doctor's departure. The intentions of the two parties for whom most interest was felt were then made known to those dearest to them.

Mr. Blake was desirous to gain the approbation of Mrs. Felton and Kate to have the marriage take place at New Year's.

"It is soon I know," said he, "to ask you to part with Susan; but I greatly desire to be settled in life, and Susan leaves it with you to decide. I, also, will await your decision."

Mrs. Felton did not hesitate to consent to his proposal. She and Kate both would like to have Susan continue with them longer; yet they felt it would be as well for them, at least, to have her leave them now. Her society had become, as they were tempted to think, quite necessary to their happiness. This feeling they confessed to Mr. Blake.

"I know only too well how to sympathize with you, my friends," he answered; "and for this very reason I wish you to be willing to resign Susan to my care. I will pledge my word to be faithful to the trust you so generously commit to my charge. I feel its importance, as you must believe."

Susan's eyes were moist with tears, while her friends were conversing, — tears not caused by sorrow, although she regretted to leave those who had been to her more than parent and sister. They were rather the effusion of joy at the thought of the affection that was cherished for her by those who were ranked among the noble and the good.

"You will have Kate always near you, I hope," said Dr. Stonely. "I wish you to live with her always, either at my house in the city, or here in your own home. I cannot think of separating you from your only daughter. I think her happiness would not be increased by a marriage that would do this."

Kate regarded the doctor as he said this with a grateful, affectionate smile. Her mother thanked him for the regard he manifested for her feelings, also for his invitation to make her one of his household, but could not, she said, determine at once what it would be best for her to do.

"I will prayerfully watch the leadings of Providence; and I shall be enabled to discern the right way in due time, I doubt not," said she.

This little gathering separated on that evening with more smiles than might be expected beaming upon their countenances; yet some wilful tears made their appearance on more than one face, as the thought intruded itself that

there could be no state on earth of unalloyed happiness, — that often, to obtain the enjoyment of one good, we must resign another. Carrie was the only one who thought she would have nothing to wish altered after Kate became a member of her family. Her young heart was buoyant with pleasure.

"How happy I am!" was her exclamation at parting with Kate, when she bade her good-by, and took her seat beside her father in the carriage that conveyed them to the cars.

CHAPTER XXVI.

"Verily from others' griefs are gendered sympathy and kindness."
"Man appoints, God disappoints."

Now commenced a busy season at Mrs. Felton's. Two weddings were anticipated, and Kate and Susan wished to make preparations for housekeeping. It was in vain that Mr. Blake had protested against having any thing arranged at Rosefield. He could not be allowed to do every thing; and so Mrs. Felton told him Susan must not go from the home of her friends without an additional token of their affectionate concern for her welfare.

Cloth was purchased, and every thing else provided with a liberal hand that was needed for the occasion. Cheerfulness presided in this dwelling, where all were employed; though thought was often running wayward for a few moments over the past, and then venturing to pry into the future, while fingers were moving in obedience to the promptings of willing hearts.

Autumn was soon gone. Winter took its place, with its fleecy robes and cheerful firesides, — around which gathered happy faces, radiant with the reflection of kindly emotions, which were cherished in hearts that glowed with love towards their fellow-beings.

Susan applied herself to work very steadily: she was anxious to do something for Kate that this friend could long keep in remembrance of her love. She was often warned that she might injure herself by too close application to work; but she always answered cheerily that she

was in little danger. Christmas came with its merry holidays. This was some interruption to labor, and afforded a change, though not much rest, to the active party at Mrs. Felton's.

Mr. Blake went to spend Christmas Day with Susan. She didn't expect him, and when he arrived she was absent from home. Susan had complained of a feeling of languor during the morning of the day previous, and her friends suggested that a short ride and change of scene might do her good. Consequently she proposed going to Mrs. Upton's, to carry an invitation from Mrs. Felton to that lady and her family to spend the next day at Rosefield. As all about the premises were engaged in various ways, she went alone. The drive was far from being unpleasant to her, although she felt a listlessness that was depressing. She spent most of the day at the cottage, having the promise of Mina's company on her way home, if she would do so.

At early nightfall, just as she was preparing to return, Mr. Blake came to accompany her, and Mina felt that her company would be an intrusion; but Susan contended that their plans need not be altered, and Mr. Blake coincided in her views of the subject. The quick eye of love enabled Mr. Blake to discern that all was not right with the object of his tenderest regard.

"You are not well, Susan," said he, as they drove from the door of Mrs. Upton's cottage, glancing at her as she sat behind him in the carriage.

"Oh yes I am! but I am dull and stupid. To-morrow I trust I shall feel brighter," said she, making an effort to throw off her feelings of depression. She did not,

however, fully succeed, although she engaged in conversation. She seemed unlike her former self.

On reaching home, she sat quietly upon the sofa during most of the evening; seldom speaking, unless when spoken to. Mrs. Felton felt greatly concerned about her, and feared that something more than fatigue affected her dear girl. Still she hoped that a night's sleep might restore her to her wonted spirits.

Bring urged by all her friends to retire to rest early, she bade them all good-night, and went up stairs. For her sake, quiet reigned throughout the house at a much earlier hour than usual. All felt the need of Susan's bright smile and lively step throughout the household, and seemed hushed to silence, that she might not be disturbed.

Christmas morning dawned brightly. The air was cold, yet not so intensely cold that one could not go abroad with comfort. A pretty level fall of snow during the night gave promise of many cheerful sleigh-rides to be enjoyed on that festal day. Old Maggie was early at the door of Susan's room, which was opened by Mina, who was very glad to see the friendly face of the good woman. Susan was shivering with cold; and all the covering that her young friend could find did not make her warm. Maggie advanced to the bedside, and looked at Susan a moment anxiously, feeling her pulse the while.

"How are you this pretty Christmas morning?" said she to Susan.

"I am not sick," was her reply, "but very cold. Is it much colder abroad than it was?" asked she.

"Not a great deal," answered Maggie; "and I wish you and Mina both a merry Christmas."

This she said as she was leaving the room; which she did immediately, and hastened to the kitchen to prepare some hot drink for her "suffering child," as she called Susan. Some pennyroyal tea was soon smoking in a bowl by the bedside of Maggie's favorite.

"Now you will drink every drop of this tea, won't you, dear?" said the kind creature, as she handed the bowl to Susan, who took it, and complied with the request of her nurse. "That will help to warm you," said she, as she took the bowl from the hand of her patient, and covered her closely with blankets. "Lie still until breakfast time," she added; "then you may feel better."

Her hope of this was faint, however; yet the dreaded thought that her darling was on the verge of a severe illness could not be indulged for a moment. It was too painful to her loving, tender heart.

At the hour of breakfast, Susan arose and partly dressed, but was obliged to lie down again. A faintness came over her, with a shivering and pain that she was unable to resist; and, yielding to its power, she gave up the idea of meeting the family with Mr. Blake at the social board, on that morning.

"By noon," said she, "I may be able to go down stairs."

Yet this hope was illusive; instead of growing better, she rapidly became worse. A physician was summoned, who endeavored to arrest the progress of disease. His efforts, however, were vain; for, before evening, Susan was unconscious of all that was passing around her. Mr. Blake was overwhelmed at this unexpected trial. He had the sympathy of the whole household to comfort him, even though they too were sorrowing over the stricken one.

This Christmas Day was a sad one to the family at Rosefield. Mina Upton spent it with them; but the Christmas tree was neglected, while the many little presents prepared for the occasion were scarcely thought of, and merry greetings were unheard after early morning. Day followed day, without bringing any change for the better in the case of Susan. Delirium continued with little interruption, and the fever threatened to prove fatal to the young sufferer.

Kate and Mr. Blake were both anxious that Dr. Stonely should be sent for; so, indeed, were all the household.

Mrs. Upton urged Mrs. Felton to send a dispatch, as soon as a messenger could ride to the nearest telegraph office, to request him to come with the least possible delay. She did send for him. All were weary with watching in this household, where every heart glowed with affection towards her whose state claimed their sympathies and demanded their efforts; yet none realized their weariness.

Dr. Stonely had previously heard of Susan's illness, and lost no time in obeying the summons to attend her. Carrie wept at the sad intelligence brought by the dispatch.

"New Year's has already come and gone by," said she, "and Susan and Mr. Blake are not married, as they had intended. How uncertain every thing is! Is it not, father?"

"In this world, my daughter, every thing is uncertain but death. And yet it is not a sad world, is it, Carrie?"

"Not altogether, I know it is not; but this sickness of Susan's makes it look sad to me just now. I am afraid it will prevent Miss Felton from coming here as soon as we expected."

"Is that the only reason why you regret Susan's illness, my dear?"

"It is not the only one, but I believe it is the strongest reason among others. I do want so very much to have Miss Felton with us."

"So do I wish very much to have Miss Felton here; but remember, Carrie, there is One who knows better than we do what is best for us all. By this dispensation we are reminded that our rest is not on earth. Let us not forget this truth, but commit every thing dear to us now to the kind keeping of our best Friend."

Dr. Stonely then knelt before the mercy-seat, and commended all he was about to leave, and those he was about to seek, to the kind care of their unchangeable Father, even their God. He then started immediately for Rosefield; and, by travelling in the swiftest trains, reached the house of Mrs. Felton in less than twenty-four hours after he bade Carrie adieu. He came as a friend, but his professional services were sought by Mr. Blake and all the friends of Susan. Her attending physician asked his counsel. He had desired advice sooner; but the idea of calling any doctor except Dr. Stonely could not be endured, consequently the physician in attendance had waited, although impatiently, for Dr. Stonely's arrival.

A consultation was held as soon as possible after he came, and the declared opinion of both doctors was unfavorable. Dr. Stonely thought there existed a possibility of recovery in the case, and suggested some remedies that had not been tried. Dr. Bliss followed these suggestions of his professional brother, yet without any expectation that they would avail in the case of his patient. Dr.

Stonely had hope; he never would despair of a case until he knew that the hand of death was laid upon the victim.

In the present case he strove more earnestly to lead his friends to submission, than to inspire them with hope. He knew how to make this case of Mr. Blake's his own. Like himself, he was now betrothed to a beloved object; and past experience had taught him that those dear to him were mortal. His society was a solace to Mr. Blake, who was grateful for his kind attentions and sympathy. Still the doctor dreaded to have him lean upon this arm of flesh.

"Do not, my dear sir," said he, "forget that it is God alone that can keep alive her whose life is so precious to you. It was a sad lesson that taught me my entire dependence upon my heavenly Father. As you already know, I was stricken in the morning of my days, comparatively speaking. My wife was removed from me in an unexpected hour. I was absent at the time, and had not the comfort of hearing her parting words, nor receiving the pressure of her hand in death. I have since thought that I would have given worlds, could I have done so, to have enjoyed the privilege of sitting by the side of my companion during her last illness; but this boon was denied me in infinite wisdom, though it was hard to believe this at that time. Ingrate that I was, I dared to question the justice of Omnipotence in taking my idols from me. I murmured at his dealings, but he was good to me. He overruled this greatest of trials to my good, and, as I trust, brought me, a prodigal from his love, back to those everlasting arms that I have found from blessed experience can protect from every ill. I would not appoint

my lot now, if I might. I feel that God can do all things better than I. We shall not at the end of life, my friend, regret one trial we have endured along its pathway."

"How I wish," said Mr. Blake, "that Susan had become my wife before this! then she would have been in New York, and you could have seen her every day."

"Be thankful it is not worse than it now is," replied Dr. Stonely. "Think of your many mercies. Even if Susan does not recover, you can be grateful that she is surrounded by dear friends, who will not fail in doing aught that mortal *can* do for her good."

Mr. Blake shuddered at the thought that Susan was liable to die; still he was well aware that a few hours more would probably decide her fate.

"Will she live?" was the question nervously asked the doctors by more than one, during that long night of suspense that followed the day on which the preceding conversation was held between Mr. Blake and Dr. Stonely.

"Would I could relieve your anxiety!" was oftentimes said, by way of reply to this inquiry; but the result of that long-continued slumber no mortal could determine.

The stillness of death prevailed in the chamber, to which the hearts of many loving friends were turned with anxious expectation. Often a figure was seen, treading softly along the hall towards the door, and listening, to catch if possible some whispered intelligence of what was passing within.

"There is no change," was the often repeated assurance given to inquirers; and, "Would there was an alteration for the better!" was as often ejaculated by those to whom this assurance was given.

Mrs. Felton went to her chamber at a late hour, oppressed with weariness and sorrow.

"It will not do," said she, mentally, "to yield thus to my feelings. I feel that my health is already beginning to suffer. I must cast my burden upon the Lord."

Just then she heard a gentle rap at her door. She arose, and opened it to admit Kate, who had followed her mother with feelings in unison with those her parent was at the moment indulging.

"Mother," said the affectionate daughter, "I must go with this trial directly to our Saviour. Will you not go with me? Without help from him, I can bear up no longer."

"He is able to raise the sinking," was the sweet reply of Mrs. Felton, as with her daughter she knelt in submission at the feet of Him who raised even the dead when on earth, and whose power is still the same. She poured out the united feelings of her own and her daughter's heart before this compassionate Friend. Pleading, not that he would perform a miracle, but that he would enable them to leave every thing connected with the object so dear to them with himself. Her life was very precious to them; if it might but be spared, they trusted the mercy would inspire them with a livelier sense of gratitude than they had ever before experienced.

A chastened feeling, that brought peace to their hearts, was the result of this communion with their Father, God. They arose from their knees, refreshed in spirit, and strengthened to go forth again to conflict with adverse circumstances, and assist others in the same noble work. Kate left her mother in her room, and went to the chamber

occupied by Susan. She still slept. Dr. Stonely sat on one side of the bed, at a little distance from it, and Dr. Bliss on the other. Mr. Blake sat at the foot, with his eyes fixed on the face of the sleeper, and his heart full of painful forebodings. Maggie sat in the hall, ready to catch the first sound that emanated from the chamber. Kate urged her to retire. She shook her head.

"It is your duty to rest, awhile at least," said Kate. "I will call you if Susan awakes."

"To please you, my dear Miss Felton, I will go and lie down."

The affectionate, faithful woman went to her chamber, saying as she left Kate, —

"Now, don't forget to call me."

Assured that she should be remembered, she laid herself upon the bed, that for some nights had been deserted. Long, long was the sleep of the patient, and more and more breathless the anxiety of waiting friends. The dawn of a new day began to streak the eastern sky, and still that silent breathing of the sleeper was undisturbed. Sometimes it seemed as if the spirit could be no longer there, so noiseless was her breathing. At length, a gentle sigh was heard, which attracted the notice of each friend. All simultaneously moved towards the bed. The physicians motioned them back; for Susan, at the moment, opened her eyes languidly. Her attending doctor took her pulse, and, bending over her, had the satisfaction of finding that consciousness had returned. Susan recognized him.

"Doctor," said she, with a faint smile.

"Be quiet," said he, and hastened to give her a reviving cordial.

"Am I very sick?" asked Susan.

"So much so that you must not talk at present," was the doctor's kind reply.

She smiled her approval of this suggestion, and again closed her eyes.

Both physicians now expressed the opinion that the crisis was past.

"With great care, she may now recover," said Dr. Stonely to Mr. Blake and Kate, who stood together at the opposite side of the room, looking at her who was so dear to them.

"Thank Heaven!" exclaimed Mr. Blake.

"No care shall be wanting," said Kate, looking a gratitude that was inexpressible. "I must tell Maggie, as I promised," and, so saying, she hurried to the good woman's room. Maggie was preparing to go down.

"Haven't you slept?" asked she.

"Indeed I have," was her prompt reply; "but tell me quick, is she like to live?"

"The doctors think so *now*," answered Kate.

"The Lord is good to us all in this. He is a hearer of prayer; but he will have us poor creatures satisfied with what he does with us, before he grants our requests. When I came up stairs to lie down, my feelings were all in commotion. Then I knelt down by my bed, but I could not pray at first; but I kept kneeling, and I said, 'Thou, O Lord! seeth my heart; I can tell thee nothing: but, Lord, make my will like thine.' I couldn't say any thing else; but I felt this, and laid down to rest, and soon went to sleep. When I awoke, I was rested in my mind, as well as body. I felt, if Miss Susan must die, it was

best, because God willed it; and now I can hope she will get well. I've ever found it so in my experience," she continued. "We must be prepared for a blessing before it comes."

"Your experience is like that of all of us, Maggie. God wills that we confide in him. 'Our extremity is his opportunity,' as has been wisely remarked."

"Yes, that is it exactly," replied Maggie, as with her young mistress she went softly down stairs. She took one loving look at Susan, before descending to the kitchen, to see to preparing a breakfast, "that," as she said, "somebody could taste of now."

The ringing of the breakfast-bell that morning was responded to by the appearance of all the family, except Susan, accompanied by her physicians and Mr. Blake; and it might be truthfully affirmed, that with grateful hearts they partook of the food set before them. Dr. Stonely started for home soon after breakfast; not, however, without promising to let Carrie visit Rosefield as soon as convenient.

"Her disappointment was great," said the doctor, "in not being allowed the privilege of coming at New Year's; and when she learns, as I think she *must*, that all our plans are thwarted, I fear she will not take it patiently. Yet it will be long before Susan will be able to go from your care, Kate, and I must be patient; duty cannot call but one way at one time."

"I feel this truth," replied Kate, "and it is well. Tell Carrie to remember who it is that has disappointed our plans, and bear the trial cheerfully. It will never do for her to bring a sad countenance here."

Cheerful faces were all those that greeted Susan's gaze, as she at times, during the next forty-eight hours, opened her eyes, and smiled upon those about her. She was too weak to speak, even had she been permitted to do so; but it rejoiced her friends to know that she knew them all, and realized their affectionate care for her. On the third day she could converse a little; and Mr. Blake was allowed to sit often for a short period at her bedside. She gained strength, but it was very slowly; and a fortnight elapsed ere Mr. Blake felt willing to leave her to go to his business, even for a few days.

Another week passed; and Dr. Stonely made another visit to Rosefield, taking Carrie with him. When questioned relative to his opinion of Susan's case, he shook his head mournfully, and answered, —

"She cannot get well till the return of warm weather; and we must all be patient with her lingering. It is harder for herself than for us."

During the three weeks she had been convalescent, she had only improved enough to admit of her being seated in a chair, while her bed was being changed.

"Is it not tiresome to lie here so long, Susan?" asked Carrie, soon after her arrival.

"Yes, it is rather wearisome," was her reply; "but it is not as bad as it might be. I have had very many comforts; and now another is added in the form of Carrie Stonely. I hope you will not think it so very sad that I am ill, Carrie, as some of my friends appear to; for I want you to look cheerful and happy. It will do me good to see your face dressed in smiles."

"I did not think I should smile while in Rosefield,"

replied Carrie, smiling at the lugubrious expression she had expected to wear; "but if you, who have suffered so much, can feel cheerful, I shall feel ashamed to let my part in this winter's trial bring gloominess to cloud your sky."

"That is right, Carrie dear," was Susan's feeble rejoinder.

"Now you mustn't talk, — father says so; but I may just tell you how much I have longed for March to come, that I could enjoy Miss Felton's society; but, now that it is nearly here, I must wait and look forward still, to some indefinite period far in the future, for the realization of my darling wishes."

"Suppose you never realize them, Carrie. It will be a Father's love that disappoints you, will it not?"

"I ought to feel that it is; but I am a selfish, wicked girl. Ever since I first saw Miss Felton, I have wished that she might become my mother; and now, as I have been upon the very verge of enjoying that happiness, it seems hard to be disappointed."

"I love Miss Felton too well myself to wonder at your partiality. I saw her, too, as long ago as you did, or only three weeks later, as she has told me; and I can sympathize with your feelings at the present time: but your father will consent to your remaining here awhile with us, will he not?"

"Yes: quite as long as I will be willing to leave him alone at home. You see I want *them* both together, so that I may enjoy the society of both at once."

"Be patient, Carrie. All will be right, and you will see it so by-and-by," said a soothing voice.

Carrie turned, and saw her friend Kate.

"All the clouds will pass away from our skies before long, Carrie," she added. "Do not dwell upon trouble. Doing so only increases it."

"I will not think of this great disappointment any more, if I can help it," returned Carrie.

Her father told her that she need not be anxious about him, and therefore consented to her spending the remainder of the winter with her friends at Rosefield, if she could be of any service.

"Her society will be useful here," observed Mrs. Felton, "if it is only in increasing the tone of cheerfulness among us."

"Then you wont care to have me stay, if I am dull, will you?" asked Carrie.

"You must not be dull. That would be wrong where there is so much reason to be cheerful. You are not always to have your own way, neither are any of us," said she.

With such helps to contentment, Carrie soon became happily forgetful of her trials. She made herself very useful in the chamber of sickness; and her face appeared to Susan as a sunbeam darting around amid the gloom of her partially lighted room. She possessed a natural tact for nursing, superior even to that possessed by Kate. Of this valuable faculty she had been ignorant until now. Having never had it called into action, it had been undeveloped; and Carrie was surprised at the efficiency of her own efforts.

"One cannot know what he is capable of doing until he tries," said she to Susan one day, not long after her ar-

rival at Rosefield. "When I first came here, I was afraid even to hand you a little drink, for fear I should do it awkwardly. Now, I could take the whole care of you."

"Trying is a good test," answered Susan; "and you can see now that some good has resulted from my illness already. It has helped to develop your faculties; and for this we should be thankful, — myself more than any one. You are a great comfort to me, Carrie."

"I am glad that I am at all useful," replied that lovely girl. "I don't see why my touch is more gentle to you, as you say, than that of your other friends. I am sure Miss Kate is extremely tender towards you."

"I know that very well," returned Susan; "but she does not possess the same gift that you do. I believe you inherit it from your father, Carrie."

"That may be; but I am as ignorant in regard to whence it came as I was a few days since of possessing it. How strange things are in this world!" she went on, musingly. "Who would ever have thought that you must be sick and suffer, in order to draw out people's faculties?"

"And try their patience, you may add," said Susan.

"You are not a trial of patience at all," quickly responded Carrie.

"But the event of my illness has been that to more than yourself and me, dear, has it not?"

"Yes, it certainly has. Father felt it to be a trial to defer his marriage, I know, and so did Mr. Blake; in short, we have all been tried, and shall be we don't know how much longer. I wonder if any thing else will occur after *you* get better, Susan?"

"That is what we may not know at present," was Susan's rejoinder.

"We are only to live day by day," remarked Kate, who had heard the last part of the conversation.

"That is what I *will* try to do," answered Carrie, "then I shall be prepared for whatever the future has in store for me, I know; but then, it is so natural to look forward, it will be hard to refrain from doing so, I fear."

"Sometimes an effort to do right requires a struggle,' said Kate.

Carrie found that it was necessary to struggle against impatience at times, although she was cheerful most of the time. She heard often from her father. All his letters were written in a pleasant, lively strain, that was hope-inspiring to his daughter; and the days and weeks followed each other calmly, if not swiftly, as she lingered in the sick-room.

March came with its cold blustering winds, as if on purpose, as Carrie said, to prevent Susan from getting well. That was not all he came for, as was soon evident. For a long while the whole of Mrs. Felton's household had been so much engrossed with the illness of Susan as to be unable to visit Mrs. Upton's family. Mina had not been with them since she returned home after her visit at Christmas. The winter had been severe, and great quantities of snow had fallen, which prevented frequent communication between the females of the two families.

On a pleasant afternoon, about the middle of this, the first month of spring, Mina rode over to see Susan, whom she had not seen for many a long day. She spent only a short time with her, but several hours with the family.

Mrs. Felton and Kate noticed that a change had taken place in her appearance since they last had seen her. Languor had taken the place of her former sprightliness of manner, and her step was slow compared to her naturally quick movements.

"What is the matter with you, my dear girl?" asked Mrs. Felton.

"Not any thing; I am only tired," replied Mina.

"What have you done to tire you so much?" inquired Kate.

"Not any thing in particular. I am lazy, I believe; for I am weary all the time."

"Does your mother know this?" asked Mrs. Felton.

"She does not, but supposes that the weather has kept me quiet of late."

"You must be attended to right away," said Mrs. Felton. "It will never do to allow a young lady to become indolent. Cannot you come and visit us every day when the weather will admit of your going abroad?"

"It would be very pleasant to me to see you every day; and, if mother will permit me to leave home so often, I will come."

"Tell your mother, Mina, that I greatly desire your company here every day, for a short time at least," said Mrs. Felton.

"But what do you intend doing to me?" inquired Mina with some curiosity.

"We shall not do any thing to you, but entertain you as agreeably as we are able to," was the lady's reply. "Will not that be a sufficient motive to induce you to come, Mina?"

"Indeed it will," she answered. "I only wondered at your asking me to come so often."

Although Mina and her mother wondered what could be the motive that prompted this request, it was readily granted. Mina looked in upon her friends daily. Sometimes she walked a part of the way thither, but was always driven back by either a servant or Kate.

Carrie could now leave Susan, as she could exert herself considerably without hazard; and, being that *almost* prodigy, an unselfish invalid, she desired Carrie to accompany Mina home, and spend a night with her. Carrie went, and, in compliance with the wishes of her friends, observed closely every symptom of Mina's during the night. She found that the patient girl was not only feverish, but that she coughed at intervals during the night. Towards morning she was covered with perspiration.

"You are really ill," said Carrie, as soon as Mina awoke. "Your mother will be obliged to call advice for you. She does not know how you are at night, I am sure, else she would have consulted a physician before now."

"No," said Mina. "She does not see me at night; and I am seldom absent from the table at meal-time, so that it is not strange that she should think me well. If my appetite should fail, she would think me sick at once."

"I shall tell your mother just how you have been through the night," said Carrie.

"I don't like the idea of that; for I may be better soon, and then she need not know any thing of my symptons," responded the affectionate girl.

"I don't like to risk this 'may be;' I must tell her. It is my duty."

Accordingly, soon after breakfast, Carrie acquainted Mrs. Upton with the manner in which Mina had spent the night.

"I wish your father could see her, Carrie; for he would not give her any medicine unless he felt it necessary. This cannot be said of every doctor, therefore I shrink from calling upon any other. Mina's appetite is pretty good yet, and I don't think one can be much ill while they have a relish for food."

"This is not always true. I have heard father say that many had been deceived in this way in regard to themselves as well as their friends," answered Carrie. "Will it not be a good plan for Miss Felton to describe Mina's case to father, and ask his opinion?"

"A very good idea. I shall be glad to have Miss Felton do this whenever she chooses."

Kate wrote that day, but it availed little. Before a reply to her letter could arrive, Mina Upton was laid low by a profuse hemorrhage from the lungs. She visited at Mrs. Felton's as usual, on the day of this attack, and was preparing for her drive home when it came on. She could not then be removed, save to a sofa; for the crimson current flowed so as to endanger life, and demand perfect quiet. The family physician was immediately summoned, and arrived in a very few minutes after. He administered remedies that soon stopped the bleeding; but Mina's little strength was prostrated. She was passive in the hands of her friends.

Carrie stood, and gazed mournfully upon her. That the circumstances connected with this dispensation affected herself, did not at that time occur to her. She loved

Mina, and the thought that she would probably soon die overwhelmed her.

"I will write to my father to come as soon as he can," said she to Kate; "that is, if you think it best for me to do so."

Kate approved of her writing, and she dispatched by the next mail an urgent request for him to hasten to her dear friend Mina.

"We all long to have you come," she wrote; "it is not myself alone that thinks you may possibly do something in this critical case to give relief."

Kate wrote a few lines, and alluded to the mysterious providence that had brought another case of dangerous illness, just at that time, to their dwelling.

"I hope I may trust, and not be afraid; for all these afflictions are sent in love," she said.

Dr. Stonely hastened to Rosefield on receiving these missives. His presence was cheering to the whole household. Even old Maggie had become attached to him, notwithstanding he was intending to take her dear Kate away from her as soon as she could be spared. Mrs. Upton, who had been kept from the bedside of her daughter until after the first burst of her uncontrollable grief had subsided, met the doctor with a feeling of delight.

"Now you are here, I feel relieved," said she to him; "for I know you will do much for my child."

"All that I can possibly do for her comfort shall be done; but do not, my friend, lean upon an arm of flesh. Rest rather upon the 'Rock of Ages.'"

"Do you consider Mina's sickness a dangerous one?"

"There is always danger around us, Mrs Upton, and

sickness is not without its amount of danger. We must refer all our interests to our compassionate Saviour."

"You don't speak encouragingly," said the fond mother, as she followed Dr. Stonely, as he turned from Mina's couch. "She is very ill, but *can* her case be as bad as Susan's was when you came to Rosefield last winter?"

"There is less reason to hope for Mina's recovery. Her symptoms are different."

Mrs. Upton wept bitterly, immoderately.

"I cannot live without my darling Mina. "Do, Dr. Stonely, try and save her as you did Susan," said she.

"I will do, as I before said, all I can for her; but the issues of life are with Omnipotence."

"I know that very well; but, oh! how can I be willing that this daughter should be removed from me by death?"

"There is One, and only One, that can make you willing. Go to Jesus, who feels for you in this affliction, and he will give you rest; but do not allow Mina to see you thus overwhelmed with sorrow. She must not be excited. Her feelings are strong; and, although at present her mind is calm, she will sympathise with you if you weep in her presence, and it will hurt her."

Mrs. Upton did not allow Mina to see her weep; but she wept often and long. She was so much afflicted, that Mrs. Felton and Kate were glad that Mina was obliged to remain at their house. Carrie was a constant attendant at Mina's bedside, whose grateful smile rewarded her for each effort that she made for the dear girl's comfort.

Dr. Stonely returned to New York again. The weddings, that all had anticipated with so much pleasure, were postponed to an indefinite period. Maggie, who was some-

what inclined to superstition, gave as the reason of this continued disappointment, that something must be wrong in regard to these contemplated unions. No other member of the household, however, concurred in this opinion. With Kate, memory was busy. She thought of the past, and from it was encouraged to greater confidence in the love and mercy of God. True, his providence had been mysterious of late towards her. Still he was too wise to err, and he *could not* be unkind. She would wait and trust, and lean by faith upon the arm that controls a world.

It was a comfort both to Kate and Carrie that the latter could remain at Rosefield. Her society gave pleasure to all in the house, — to none more than Mina. Carrie's footstep was lighter than any other, as she moved about the room, and her touch more gentle, as she arranged the pillows, or bathed the burning brow of the patient invalid. Kate told Dr. Stonely, in a letter, that her services were invaluable at Rosefield, and they did not wish to do without her. Although Mina partially recovered from the hemorrhage, it was evident to her physicians that disease was making rapid progress in prostrating her strength. This opinion was expressed before Dr. Stonely's departure, and all the family understood that Mina must die. The victim of this insidious disorder alone was ignorant of her physical state. On being asked, by Mrs. Felton, her views in regard to the termination of her illness, she replied in a sweet voice, —

"I have hardly given the subject a thought. I have felt anxious only to know and do my present duty, because I feel satisfied that the kindest of friends are taking all the care possible of my feeble body. I pray daily for gratitude, patience, and submission."

It was evident to all who beheld her lovely countenance, and saw her affectionate smile, that this prayer was granted. It was a beautiful sight to see the lively, merry-hearted Carrie bending lovingly over the pillow of this youthful Christian, and wiping the dews of death from her pallid brow. She alone was with her in the hour of dissolution, which came unexpectedly to all. It was Carrie that received that long, loving, farewell kiss intended for all the circle of friends, who, though they hastened to obey a summons to her room, were preceded by the Angel of Death, as if he would spare many hearts the pang of a last adieu.

"My love and kiss for all, Carrie, for I am going now to Jesus," were the last words uttered by Mina; and they were comprehensive to all those who mourned her early exit from earth's transitory joys. It was early springtime when Mina's remains were deposited in the graveyard at Rosefield; and the hand of affection planted many flowers around her grave, that were emblematical of the loveliness of her whose mortal part reposed beneath the sod.

CHAPTER XXVII.

"Every cloud has its silver lining."
"I lack one loaf of that daily bread that I pray for, if I have no cross."

"I WONDER why brother John has not visited us during this long, trying winter!" remarked Kate, one morning soon after the death of Mina. "He must have had cares at home to prevent him."

"I think so," said her mother. "He has ever been too affectionate a son and brother to allow us to think that common occurrences would have detained him from us, when he knew how we were afflicted."

Mrs. Felton judged rightly in regard to her son. He had been greatly perplexed in relation to his affairs, and had been kept at home by sickness in his own family. Emma had been ill during most of the winter. This fact he had not made known to his northern friends. "It would do no good," he said, "but only increase their sorrows." They had thought his letters obscure and unsatis factory; but the minds of both mother and daughter were preöccupied, and did not dwell long upon the subject. Often, very often, during the months gone by, had the wish been expressed at Groveton that the loved relatives could be with them. Many prayers had been offered, too, for Susan's recovery. Good old Ruthy said it must be that she should see the dear child gain.

"She'll done get married yet, and make a wedding-ture out here, as she 'spected. I does believe this."

"We all hope she will," said Mrs. Felton, with a sigh.

Ruthy regarded her mistress with an inquiring look.

"I wouldn't be 'pertinent, no how; but 'pears like massa an' you is troubled 'bove measure 'bout Emma's sickness an' the news from the North. Yer take all this 'ere harder 'n yer did Rosa's death, dear lamb dat she was! an' I can't bar yer ter go so troubled."

"It is a comfort to know that you feel for us in our afflictions, Ruthy; for we have more trials than you know of," said her mistress.

"I pray de Lord to help ye through dem," said the good woman; "an' he will, for he says 'yer strength shall be like ter yer day.' It does not become me to ax what plagues yer," said she, hesitatingly.

"You will know before long," was Mrs. Felton's sad response.

Too soon a knowledge of the cause of this sadness reached the people at the plantation. Mr. Felton had loaned money to a large amount, which he had found was lost to him. This intelligence, which he had received some six months previous, had obliged him to mortgage considerable of his property. He did so, hoping that, after a lapse of time, a small portion of this money might be repaid. This hope, however, proved fallacious; and he had been for weeks learning that he was at the mercy of those who would be glad, and exult in the idea, of his being reduced to the necessity of selling his slaves. Many there were who had long felt rebuked by his example of kind treatment to servants. Their own conduct appeared to great disadvantage, when contrasted with his; and this engendered a feeling of envy, which is ever the offspring of coarse and base minds.

One day, in the latter part of April, a sheriff came with power to attach some of his property, as the mortgage had been foreclosed. One of Mr. Felton's creditors accompanied this man, and looked about among the people as if qualifying himself to choose those among them he deemed best fitted for his service. He was evidently interested in the motherly appearance of Ruthy.

"I like the looks of this old gal," said he, approaching her, and unceremoniously laying his hand upon her shoulder.

"What d'yer want er me?" asked the indignant woman.

"No matter," said the man, in a surly tone. "It is enough that I do want you."

"Ye'll certain have ter wait a good long spell afore yer git me, and two or three more on dis 'ere people; 'cause we's free, yer see, and has good papers to show anybudy what's wants ter look at em'."

"That is all you know. You shet up in a minnit, you black thing, and mind yer biziness."

"That's jist 'xactly what I'm a doin',"—in no wise daunted by the assertion or commands of one whom she knew could never have a legal claim upon her. "I'se bound ter keep out of the hands of them what hasn't no kind er right ter take me, an' I'll do it," said she, with an air of dignity, as she walked to a little distance from him, and stood, regarding him with complacency.

The man followed her.

"Jist keep your hands off er me, now; 'cause I don't belong to anybody but my Maker," said Ruthy; "and I'll be let alone, that I will."

"You impudent hussy, I'll make you smart for this talk when I git you in my hands."

"I can wait till that ar time comes, very well," said the woman, with a good-natured smile. "But I know I isn't imperdent in jist sayin' what is true as Bible. I doesn't want ter treat anybudy bad; and I only axes other folks ter be good like ter me, or else let me alone. I wouldn't do a thing ter harm ye; but I'll pray for ye, that ye may have a better heart than ter want ter git folks in yer power ter pay 'em for jist wantin' ter be let alone."

"I would like to know," said this specimen of pompous tyranny, going into the house and addressing Mrs. Felton, "if some of these people have free papers. Is it true that this old woman, who seems so smart, is not a slave?"

"Very true," answered Mrs. Felton, mildly. "My husband had free papers made out for her, and her daughter, previous to the death of my own daughter, who on her death-bed (this was uttered with emotion) requested it might be done. The papers will show the exact date of the transaction."

"Are there any more free negroes here?"

"Yes, there is a young woman and her mother, whom my husband's sister was instrumental in making free. She took the daughter North, but allowed her to return to her mother, who had not then become free. That is the reason why they are both here at present. Our sister has been unable to visit us this winter, as she had contemplated doing, and these women chose to stop with us until they could see Miss Felton."

"Pretty work this, to turn niggers' heads topsy-turvy

by giving them freedom, when they are better off in slavery," said the man gruffly.

"I believe," replied Mrs. Felton in the same gentle ladylike tone in which she usually spoke, "that your last assertion requires proof. The colored people are as well qualified to enjoy freedom as the whites; and, for one, I shall be glad to see the day when they become, as they were originally, a nation by themselves."

"What shall we do for help if that time ever comes? — though I don't believe it will," he added.

"Hire poor white people; and pay them liberally, that they may feel encouraged to do well. This will elevate a portion of our population, for whom, at present, we have reason to blush, because their degradation is our own work."

"I am satisfied with the present state of things," was the blunt rejoinder. "Niggers were made on purpose to labor for the whites."

"I feel that you are mistaken in your views on this subject; but here comes Mr. Felton and some of the gentlemen who agreed to meet here to-day."

The party approaching now entered the house, where they were soon joined by one or two more gentlemen who had also promised to be present. Mr. Linds, the man who came with the official, was taken by surprise when he learned the object of this meeting. It was to petition his creditors to grant him a season of grace that would allow him time to visit his northern friends, of whom he hoped to obtain money to free himself from present embarrassment. One after another consented to wait upon him as long as he had requested; but some demurred,

grumbled, and contended that there was no reason why he should not give up a portion of his people. Mr. Felton did not attempt to argue with such; he only entreated them to grant the favor he had solicited. Mr. Linds was very unwilling at first to listen to a proposal made by a majority of the party, to wait upon Mr. Felton.

"I want some of these slaves," he said; "that old woman is just such a servant as we need to home, but she says how she's free."

"So she is," replied Mr. Felton, "and her daughter also."

"Your sister has some women here I understand."

"My sister freed some women, or rather was the means of so doing, who are here at present. Should they choose to live with my sister, when she becomes a housekeeper, she will employ them."

"Your sister will consult their will, it seems, in regard to this matter?" remarked one of the gentlemen. "One would suppose she had a claim to their services after having done so much for them."

"Upon their gratitude you mean, sir, do you not?" asked Mr. Felton.

"Both services *and* gratitude," answered the other.

"I hope you do not imagine that niggers have any gratitude for anything?" said Mr. Linds.

"I don't *imagine* that they are grateful; I *know* them to be so, and affectionate also, to a great degree."

"So are some entire brute animals,— dogs, for instance."

"Your remark implies that some animals are half brute; for myself," said Mr. Felton, "I must confess I have never seen any of this species of creatures."

"Why, all niggers are of this class, of course."

"I doubt this assertion very much. My experience teaches me that it is not correct," said Mr. Felton.

Some of the party thought Mr. Linds's position a bold one, and contended that the colored race was an inferior one; while others admitted that they should not feel guiltless to treat them as slaves, if they were equal in any respect to the whites."

Mr. Linds advocated his position. "They have not feeling like other people," he contended; "and life to them is less than to us, as well as death, that makes an end of them altogether. There is no hereafter to the poor simple things."

"It were well for some masters of slaves if this were true; but it is far enough from being so," responded Mr. Felton.

"What reason can you give for believing niggers have souls, and are accountable, like ourselves?"

"Enough, I believe, to convince any rational being; but first allow me to ask, Mr. Linds, if you believe the Bible."

"I do, certainly."

"Then you believe in God, and a Saviour, in whose merits we are to trust for salvation from sin, and the anger of our offended Creator, do you not?"

"Certainly, or I suppose I do; at least, that is what I was taught, in my childhood, to be the doctrine of the Bible," replied Mr. Linds.

"Then let me ask if a creature without a soul, only part human, can be supposed to understand and appreciate the truths of the gospel."

"Of course not: these colored people are not accountable."

"You expect them to do right?"

"To obey what commands are given them. A dog can and ought to do that."

"Did you ever see a Christian when in near prospect of death, Mr. Linds?"

"Only one, — an uncle of mine, — some years ago."

"Do you think he realized his situation?"

"He appeared to see things clearer than ever before."

"You think he was not deluded?"

"I believe he was calm, and had a clear conviction of what had passed, also the present and future. He could not have been deluded."

"Would you like to see another case like his?"

"Yes, I would."

Mr. Felton arose.

"Call your mistress," said he to a servant who stood in the hall.

"She be'd jist done gone to Ruthy's cabin," answered Jake.

The boy was weeping.

"Lucy's dyin' now, an' Ruthy sent for missis."

"Will you go with me a few moments?" asked Mr. Felton of the man with whom he had been conversing.

The other arose and followed his host, who invited any or all of the party, if they wished, to accompany him. Only one or two cared to go out; and these, with Mr. Felton and Linds, took their way to Ruthy's cabin. This was a neat little dwelling, almost hid by the luxuriant vines that crept over it. The little door-yard was beauti-

fied with choice flowers, that had been nurtured and trained by the careful hands of Lucy. The floor of the room into which the outside door opened was scoured white; and every article within betokened neatness and taste.

"This is a slave's home, isn't it?" asked Mr. Linds.

"It was once, but is not now," answered Mr. Felton, in a gentle whisper, as he led the way to the inner apartment.

This room corresponded in neatness with the outer one. On a bed, neatly dressed in white, lay the dying negress. Her countenance was expressive of a serene happiness, such as the world, with all its delights, cannot afford. A vase of pretty flowers stood upon a stand near her bedside, at which she was gazing when the gentlemen entered. Mrs. Felton and Ruthy sat near the bed, and arose on seeing strangers enter. Lucy turned her face towards the door, and smiled gratefully as Mr. Felton drew near.

"Massa, I am glad you's come in to see me," said she; "for I wants ter bid you good-by."

"Do you think that you are going to leave us now, Lucy?"

"Yes, massa. Jesus my dear Saviour calls me, an I loves ter go ter meet him. Massa, I must see you in heaven; will I?"

"Lucy, I hope to go there."

"Oh! yer must do more'n that; yer must be sure to git ready for to come arter me. I'se a poor sinner, but God has made me rich in givin' me a heart to bleve in an' love Jesus."

"Don't you think you may be deceiving yourself, and

thinking all this when it is not true?" asked one of the gentlemen present.

"I *feel* this to be so, — I don't *think* so," replied Lucy, her face beaming at the moment with an exultant smile. "Oh, how good the Lord has been ter me all my life-time! He has taken care o' me, let me live where I could see people that loved him, an' he's gin me the best friends that ever was gin to anybody." Then, turning to Mrs. Felton, she continued, —

"Don't forget ter thank Miss Kate for her kindness, and tell her that I'se wanted ter see her for a long while. Tell her I loves her now, and shall love her for ever in that world where we shall be together with our dear, dear Saviour."

"I doubt not, Lucy," said Mr. Felton, "that you and Kate will meet in heaven."

"Yes, massa," said she; "and there will be a great many others there that have loved our Saviour, and tried to please him on earth. Oh, I wish all would only go to Jesus, my best friend! 'Pears 's if I could take everybody in my arms, an' carry them right ter him. I love everybody."

"Some have been ugly to you, Lucy, haven't they? Can you love *them?*"

"La yes, massa! I doesn't think o' that. I'se only sorry they's done wrong. It don't hurt me. I loves *all*, because my Saviour died to save 'em."

Observing her mother weeping, she said, —

"Don't ye cry, mudder, now God's doin' for you jist what you'se asked him ter."

"I feel he's good," answered Ruthy, "berry good; yet

its natural like ter cry when we sees them we love goin' way from us. I have prayed or told my heavenly Fader a great many times, that, if he could let me live an' take care o' my poor child till he called her home, I hoped he would make me thankful. Now he's done jist what I wanted him ter, an' I do thank him for it, I'm sure; but still the tears will come," said the fond mother, wiping her eyes.

"You won't be left 'lone," said Lucy; "an' then it won't be long 'fore you'll done come arter me. It seems to me now but a little ways ter heaven; an' I know I shall see you dere."

"Jist so Miss Rosa talked," said Ruthy.

Mrs. Felton responded to this by saying, —

"The language and feelings of all Christians are similar, I believe."

"Dey's all teached by de same Sperit, missus," replied Lucy, "an' dey all loves de same Saviour. Oh, how sweet it'll be to live whar all is thinkin' the same way, and thankin' de same bressed Lord!"

In silence the spectators in that room of death stood or sat, as if spell-bound to the spot. Why they tarried they could not have told, if they had been asked; but an invisible presence was there, and hallowed the scene. That Saviour who says to those who love him, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee," was making the dying pillow of this poor despised Christian soft by the support of his almighty arm. The proud, gay, thoughtless man of the world could not but feel awed by such an influence; while those who revered the sacred name of Him who was being honored by the manifestations of his grace and mercy, in this case of lovely piety, mentally rejoiced.

Lucy lay quiet for a few minutes, regarding all present with a look of affectionate interest. She then closed her eyes, and breathed so gently that all thought for a moment that her spirit had departed. Yet none moved, but gazed in silence. In a short time she opened her eyes, and, smiling sweetly, said in a low voice, —

"I'se prayed for all o' yer; I want ye all to come arter me, for I'se goin' now ter Jesus. Kiss me, mudder, — good-by."

She ceased speaking, for the Angel of Death had kindly borne her soul to realms of everlasting bliss. Ruthy sorrowed deeply for a time.

"I did 'spect she'd a lived a little longer," said this bereaved mother; "but God has taken her, and he is that kind."

"Yes, Ruthy; his time is always the best," said Mrs. Felton.

The gentlemen left the cabin.

"Was that spirit *half* human only, think you?" asked Mr. Felton, addressing Mr. Linds, as they went out.

"Upon my word," replied the man, "it don't hardly seem so; but I'm puzzled about this matter. Anyhow, a man wouldn't be sorry to be like this gal when he gits to the end of his days."

"Balaam felt thus," said Mr. Felton, "when he exclaimed, 'Let me die the death of the righteous, and may my last end be like his!'"

On joining those of the party who had remained in the house, those who had visited Lucy spoke of what they had seen.

"You should have gone with us," said one; "it don't

hurt a man once in a while to be reminded of the end of his existence here. I cannot forget what this girl said, — that it was but a little way to another world."

"She was not a slave," said Mr. Linds, "I believe."

"No: she was free, and happy in the affections of those who surrounded her," replied Mr. Felton. "Still she preferred heaven to earth. There must be a reality in a religion that can give so much comfort in the trying hour of death."

"I am convinced of that," said the gentleman who had before spoken. "I shall not soon forget what I have this day witnessed."

Mr. Felton communicated to his wife the arrangements that had been made relative to the settlement of his business.

"I must start immediately for Rosefield," said he. "I hate to trouble mother and sister with this disagreeable affair, more than I can express; and yet I know them too well not to feel satisfied that they would feel hurt if I did not apply to them in this emergency."

"It is very hard, just now that Kate is on the eve of marriage," responded Mrs. Felton sorrowfully; "but it is better to go forward and act, than to sit brooding over the difficulty."

"I know it," was the husband's reply; "still, I hate to leave home while Emma is so feeble."

"I wish you could take her and her nurse with you to Rosefield," said the wife.

"She is not able to perform the journey, and I could ill afford the expense at this juncture."

Mrs. Felton strove to suppress a sigh, while a patient smile illumined her features. She saw her husband depart

with a heavy heart. Her faithful, confidential servant, Ruthy, was in deep affliction. And now, when Emma and herself stood most in need of her sympathy and kind offices, she felt that she must exert herself to comfort and cheer this good old creature; and not her alone, but the whole household, for a dark cloud seemed to overspread the horizon of this usually cheerful dwelling.

Never could the society of another have been valued more than that of Kate, could she have been there at that crisis.

"I wish Miss Kate was here," were words often spoken at the plantation.

A vague sense of some misfortune depressed the spirits of the people. A dread of being obliged to be sold seemed to take possession of every mind. They collected in groups, and talked almost constantly of what might be the result of that meeting of the creditors of their master. Ever on the alert to find out the why and wherefore of any thing that occurs out of the common course of things, slaves always are. They understand, and only too well, that their weal or woe depends entirely upon the prosperity or adversity of those who control their destinies. To be sent from the Felton plantation would be the greatest of trials to any of the people belonging to it. They longed to know what their present prospects were, but they wanted courage to ask their mistress.

No wonder there was sadness at Groveton throughout the whole house; for the master was absent, and the presiding spirits of the place were bowed with sorrow. Mrs. Felton was not so much occupied by her own troubles, that she could remain long unmindful of the grief of

those around her. She endeavored to banish sadness from her countenance, and appear cheerful in the presence of those for whose sake her own heart was pained. Her recent trials had shown her the state of her feelings. Before this she had not supposed herself opposed to slavery, at least so far as her own slaves were concerned; but now she realized that they might be sold, and become the property of men who might treat them unkindly. She felt this would be the greatest of evils, and regretted that she should indirectly be the cause of others' woe.

This reflection weighed upon her spirits more than the loss of property on her own account. She could bear the thought of poverty, without the added pang of bringing distress upon those who had looked to her for protection from ill.

Emma, from whom this fond mother wished to hide her perplexities, saw that something was preying upon her mind. She knew why her kind nurse had been much of the time absent from her chamber of late; but, now that her father had gone, she suspected that there existed some other cause for the anxiety she had failed to conceal.

"My dear mother," said she, as her mother was sitting near her, while she sat supported by pillows in an easy chair, on the day after her father left home.

"What will you have, my dear?" asked Mrs. Felton, as Emma paused after addressing her, and looked tenderly in her face.

"I would have you look happy if I might; if not, I would know the cause of your sorrow. If I am worthy of your confidence, don't conceal anything from me because I am feeble; but tell me all that troubles you. It

will not hurt me to share your trials, so much as it will to feel that you are afraid to trust me."

"My dear girl," replied Mrs. Felton, "I have dreaded to afflict you by speaking of that which perplexes your father and myself. No child ever deserved the confidence of his or her parents more than yourself. You shall know all. I hope, however, that things will turn out more favorably than of late we have feared. Your father has gone to try and raise money, so as to prevent farther trouble."

"Has he met with losses, mother?"

"Yes; in consequence of the bankruptcy of men to whom he had loaned a large amount of money. To meet his own liabilities, some time since, he was obliged to raise money by mortgaging the plantation. Until very recently he has hoped to receive a small portion of the sum loaned. Now he has relinquished that idea entirely; and, to prevent our people from being sold, he has gone to New England."

"Do the servants know anything of these affairs?" asked Emma, anxiously.

"I think they suspect that something is wrong; and they look sad and anxious. It would be the hardest part of losing this money to be obliged to let the servants be sold, would it not?"

"It would, indeed. How grieved sister Rosa would be, if she was living now, to know this painful change!"

"I know she would be greatly afflicted if she was here; and it is pleasant to think she is where sorrow can never invade her joy."

"Dear Aunt Kate will sympathize with us in our trials, I am sure."

"Too much for her peace, I fear; and yet she would wish us to tell her all our troubles."

"Grandmother has been afflicted during the winter you say, as well as ourselves."

"She has; and your aunt, too, has been disappointed, as well as Susan, and prevented from coming here. Yet it is, as she will say, 'all for the best.'"

The time that intervened before Mr. Felton could write to his family from Rosefield appeared long to them; they counted the days, as they seemed to go by on leaden wings.

Ruthy soon returned to her duties in the house; and the look of placid feeling that was revealed in her comely face proved contagious to the family.

"I can't bar ter see ye look so sorryful like," said the affectionate creature. "I'se selfish, and want yer to comfort me, now that I'se got no child or kin ter love me."

"We all on us love ye, Aunt Ruthy," said Jake; "but we feels bad 'cause we're afeered massa's gwine ter bleeged ter sell us ter some o' them 'ere men that comed here t'other day. I heered um talk when they's all togedder in de parlor; and I know that massa's done gone now to try an' git money so we shan't be selled. But I'm dreffful 'feered he won't git it; an' then I shall die, I know I shall; for I shall have ter be toted off nobody knows whar. O dear Aunt Ruthy! what shall we all do?"

"Be patient, an' leave it all in de Lord's hands: he'll make it all right."

"You'll pray for us all now, won't you?" said another member of the household who was standing by.

"To be sure I will, chile. I allers does, an' I shan't

forgit ye now, when you are troubled so bad. But cheer up; don't look so sorryful-like, for I'se got umpression that Miss Kate 'll be here afore long. The Lord 'll send us help by her, I reckon. I make sure she'll do all she can ter keep de people from being toted off; so cheer up, childers, an' do de bery best ye can while massa's 'way. Jake, go ter yer work, while I goes ter Miss Emma, dear lamb."

Ruthy well-nigh forgot her own sorrow in administering consolation to others.

"If de wust comes, yer'll have me ter wait on ye, missus, while I'se spared; and Miss Emma, dear baby, will have her ole nuss ter care for her. But my 'pinion is that the wust haint agoin' ter come any how, unless Miss Kate dies."

"Miss Kate is going to be married, Ruthy; and then she can't do as she has done, *perhaps*."

"I reckon she'll never marry a man that ain't good an' kind like herself. I 'spect I shall like her husband as soon as I sees him. Does ye know his name, missus?"

"Yes: it is Stonely. He is a physician, Ruthy, and has one daughter, who is a young lady."

"Bress de Lord for that! I know well enough what sort er folks they is 'fore I sees um; but we'll all see um 'fore long, depend on't. That's my umpression, an' I can't help thinkin' so."

"Is it faith that makes you expect to see Kate, or haven't you prayed that she might come to do us good now?"

"I dun no 'bout faith; but I'se prayed 'bout every day that de Lord would send Miss Kate to help us in our trouble."

"We hope your prayers will be answered," remarked Mrs. Felton.

"Somehow," said Emma, "it is a comfort to me to know that Ruthy prays for us, I believe. I expect her to receive what she asks for. At any rate, I could not get along as well without her."

"Thank ye, Miss Emma, for yer love for me ole lonely self. Yer knows I love ye, an' all of yer family, an' I wants ter see yer all from under dis 'ere dark cloud that's over us jist now. Aint it a'most time to hear somethin' from massa?" she asked.

"Yes; I shall expect a letter now at any time," was her mistress's reply.

They looked several days, however, before the welcome missive arrived. Those were days wherein hope and fear alternated; and they passed wearily enough to the family at the plantation. At length Mrs. Felton's heart was gladdened by the receipt of a letter, the contents of which lessened her anxieties. The letter not only contained the intelligence of Mr. Felton's arrival at Rosefield, but also stated that he would in all probability be enabled to keep all the people at Groveton, as in days past. This was good news indeed to those who had suffered so much suspense.

"Bress de Lord! he is beginning to let us see the bright side of de cloud," said Ruthy, when she heard Mrs. Felton read some extracts from her husband's letter.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"And you, my dearest friends! how shall I thank you? What shall I do to show my grateful heart?"

It was on the evening of a somewhat chilly and cloudy day, in the latter part of the month of April, that the family at Rosefield were gathered around the tea-table. Carrie Stonely was still there, with her bright countenance, to cheer and enliven the little circle. The exuberance of her gayety was measurably chastened, it is true, by the scenes through which she had passed; but she was the same light-hearted, lively creature that she had ever been.

"I do wish," said she, as she seated herself by Susan, who was now able to join her friends at the social board, "that this coquettish Miss April would wear a smiling face long enough to let Susan go abroad and inhale good air, that she may grow strong. I declare I'm waiting for these weddings to come off; besides, I want the opportunity of visiting Mrs. Blake in New York. Just think how very agreeable it must be to me to run up those marble steps on Union Square, and ring for admittance at the door of that palace of a house where she is to live. Then think again how lovely it will be, after I gain ingress to the premises, to be permitted to go straight up stairs and knock at the door of Susan's room, which will be opened by her own dear self, who will assure me of her great pleasure at beholding me. Then, in a twinkling, I shall be cosily seated; while many a pleasant hour will pass

almost unheeded by Susan, who will be so strangely fascinated with my society, that she will have neither eyes nor ears for any other object, while I am with her."

"It is to be hoped that your visits will be 'few and far between,' if their effect is to be so disastrous to the comfort of others," said Mrs. Felton, who could not refrain from smiling at the playful strain in which Carrie had indulged.

"I don't know that I shall have either time or inclination to leave my own home very often," replied Carrie; "for the company there will be rather desirable than otherwise, — that is, if it ever reaches father's premises. Sometimes I almost despair of having things as I wish."

Kate was about to reply to this last remark, when a visitor was announced, who proved to be none other than Mr. Felton. The whole party at the table arose, and affectionate greetings were exchanged with the new comer by all.

"You did not write that you intended to visit us," said Mrs. Felton. "How is it, John? Did you mean to surprise us, or did you come unexpectedly?"

"I came unexpectedly," answered he, with a sigh which he vainly attempted to suppress.

"Well, take a seat at the table, for you must need refreshment," said his mother; "and after tea you can tell us all we wish to know about the folks at Groveton."

"I will," replied the son, seating himself beside Kate at the table; and I thank you for your interest in my family. But you will not be cheered by my account of home affairs."

"Is Emma worse?" asked Kate anxiously.

"Not worse," replied her brother, abstractedly. "She

is feeble, however, and we feel some solicitude on her account."

He then paused, and sipped his tea slowly and silently.

"Are you ill, John," asked Kate, in a tone of concern.

"No, I am not ill; I am thinking."

"Then do please defer your reflections to some other time, and partake of these doughnuts. I think they will assist your thoughts."

Mr. Felton mechanically followed the suggestion of his sister so far as to take a cake from off the plate that was handed him, and taste it.

"I cannot eat now," he at length said; "I have no appetite."

Carrie, whose quick perceptions enabled her to discern that there was something upon the mind of their visitor that he wished to communicate to his friends, asked to be excused, saying, as she arose from the table, —

"Jacob is going over with the carriage to Mrs. Upton's on an errand; and I think I will accompany him, and spend the night there. Now that you have other company, you can spare me."

Her friends, who appreciated her instinctive delicacy in thus withdrawing from their little circle, were quite ready to excuse her absence, but assured her that they should either go or send for her the next day.

"You have not forgotton Mrs. Upton, who visited the plantation some years since?" said Kate, addressing her brother.

"I have not, certainly," he answered. "Are you now intimate with her?" he inquired.

"We have become somewhat so the last year; but why do you ask?"

"Only, because your tastes were so dissimilar, I thought it strange."

"Then the idea has not occurred to you that *her* character might change?"

"No: I was not looking for such an event. Has it really changed?"

"Yes, brother," responded Kate: "there is, you are aware, nothing too hard for Almighty Power to accomplish."

"I ought to understand this experimentally, certainly. You must tell me Mrs. Upton's history by-and-by; but, now we are by ourselves, I must tell you my own tale of sorrow."

Observing Susan had arisen from her seat, he remarked that she was one of the family, and he should not feel restraint in her presence.

"I thank you for your confidence in me," said Susan, while tears filled her eyes. "I am sure every thing that interests you or yours is a matter of concern to me," said she, reseating herself.

Mr. Felton then laid before his friends the painful subject of his misfortunes; assuring them that he did so with great reluctance, and that no consideration could have influenced him to trouble them with these disagreeable affairs, except that of parting with his people.

"And is this all your trouble?" asked his mother and sister, in one breath.

"Yes, this is all. Do you not consider it enough?" asked he.

Kate smiled cheerfully as she replied, —

"Oh, yes! quite enough for some circumstances; and

yet it is not as bad as I had feared, judging from your lugubrious expression of countenance.

"Why did not you inform us of your perplexities sooner?" asked Mrs. Felton.

"Because I have hoped, until recently, that I could extricate myself, and you might remain ignorant of my trials. I well knew that you would sympathize deeply in them, and I shrank from giving you pain."

"How large a sum do you need at the present time?" inquired Kate.

"It will take forty thousand dollars to relieve me from present embarrassment. I do not, however, expect you to advance that sum. I hope to be able to hire a part of it for an indefinite period, and refund the whole amount in small sums."

"Such a course as that will make a lonesome look for you, John, and will only scantily relieve you from perplexity," said his mother.

"Yet it is the very best course I can pursue. If I had no people to suffer with me, or rather through me, I should choose poverty without hesitation. I would not struggle a moment to keep up appearances. It is the people we think of most: they must not be scattered. It would be to them even a greater trial than it generally is to slaves to be sold and driven away, because they have been treated tenderly."

"Mother," said Kate, "I believe that you and I can help brother out of this muddy place: I see a way which we will talk of by-and-by. And you, John Felton," she continued playfully, addressing her brother, "have got to discard that mournful face of yours without delay; so you

may as well put it off at once. Have you exhibited this sadness to your people at the plantation?" she asked, approaching him, and laying her hand upon his shoulder.

"I fear that I have failed in my attempts to conceal my anxieties from some of them," replied the brother, with a sigh.

"And the contagion caught by any one in the house must be speedily communicated to all on the premises; and, now that you have left them, I dare say there is quite an assemblage of rueful visages, that are indexes to hearts that will be gladdened by a line from you. So do hurry and write home this very night, and relieve the minds of all who belong to you by informing them that things will go on much as usual, only that the routine of daily life will be varied with them, before long, on receiving a visit from some of their northern friends."

"Kate, don't you talk wildly when you speak so confidently of helping me out of my difficulties?"

"No, not at all. My joy at seeing you has made me a little beside myself, perhaps; but not so much so that I cannot clearly see the way in which you are to be assisted."

"The gratitude I feel for your kindness I cannot express. I will, as you propose, write immediately to Martha, whose heart is now overburdened with anxiety."

After Mr. Felton had written a letter, which was sent that night to the post-office, he retired early to rest, at the suggestion of his mother.

"See that you do rest now, brother," said Kate, who attended him to his chamber; "cast *all* your cares at this hour, both for time and for eternity, upon Him who is able

to bear them. Remember, it is a duty that you owe him."

"Would that I could do so, Kate, my dear, good sister!" was his reply, as she bade him good-night, and hastened to rejoin her mother and Susan, whom she had left in the parlor.

"Don't, my dear Ma Felton, seek to deprive me of this great privilege," were the words that caught the ear of Kate, on entering the room.

These words were uttered by Susan, with an earnestness that arrested the attention of her friend, and led her to inquire what the privilege might be to which she alluded.

"The privilege of showing that I am not ungrateful for, or unmindful of, the great kindness shown me in my girlhood," replied Susan with warmth.

"We feel that you have done that long ago," said Mrs. Felton.

"But it has never been in my power, until now, to render service towards any of the dear friends to whom I am so deeply indebted."

"What would you do now?" asked Kate, who was mystified by the conversation to which she had listened.

"I would, I will, put a part of my marriage settlement into your brother's hands. He needs money at present, and the amount Mr. Blake has settled upon me is not small. I can give up a part of it without injuring any one, and I shall not be happy if denied the privilege of presenting Mr. Felton with twenty-five thousand dollars. I shall offer it as a gift that I wish him to accept: if he is unwilling to do this, he may return it some day, very far distant, in the future."

"But what, my dear girl, will Mr. Blake say, if you thus dispose of what he has so recently made yours?" inquired Kate.

"He will be gratified at this disposal of his money; if he is not, I have misjudged his character. He will come here to-morrow, and I will lay this subject before him."

"I am glad you expect Mr. Blake so soon for more than one reason," remarked Mrs. Felton. "It will be a comfort to us all to have you consult him on this subject; for, much as it would oblige my son to accept the gift you would bestow, it would not be pleasant to do so, and feel that possibly the action might be the means of marring your comfort."

"That implies," responded Susan, "that there is a possibility of Mr. Blake's betraying littleness of character."

"I think otherwise," said Kate. "You view the subject in a different light from that in which your friends see it. But do not think more of these things to-night, Susan, but seek rest; for you have been too much excited already."

"I will obey you in this, willingly," answered Susan; "but do not, if you love me, offer an objection to what I propose doing. I must be indulged in this one act."

This was said while passing to her chamber, which, having reached, she bade Kate good-night, kissing her affectionately, and urging her to remember that in one respect her wishes were to be held sacred.

"We will see to-morrow, I trust," was the reply of her friend, as she closed the door to Susan's room, and went to her own and her mother's apartment.

"I hope," said Mrs. Felton, when she found herself alone with Kate, "that Mr. Blake will feel willing to gratify Susan in her wish to assist John, — not so much for his sake, as for her own. She is a noble girl; and such an act on her part will silence those who contend that those whose early years are spent amid poverty and crime are necessarily degraded in their taste and feelings for ever. It is not so; and, if the case of Susan might encourage only one person to do by some poor forlorn child now in wretchedness what we have done for her, another soul might be saved, which in the estimation of our Saviour is worth more than worlds. The language of this act will speak to all who know Susan, and will honor God."

"I think as you do, mother, in regard to this; and I wish that the grateful and affectionate feelings of this dear girl may be gratified: but we can help brother out of his trouble without her aid."

"By retrenching our expenditures, I am sure we shall be able to do this," was Mrs. Felton's reply; "and yet, daughter, it would take the most of our property to do it. I don't like that you should be obliged to forego the pleasure of furnishing anew some parts, at least, of your new home, if you are married; but you will have to submit to this mortification if you let John have your money."

"My dear mother," exclaimed Kate, "don't give yourself any uneasiness on my account. Have you not taught me from babyhood that a lesser good must always be sacrificed to a greater? and shall I not act upon this principle now? I am sure I dread no mortification that can result from doing what I can to aid my brother in this emer-

gency. Besides, any sacrifice will be a pleasure, when compared with the pain I should experience at having the people on the plantation sold. Dr. Stonely is not mercenary in his views. I think it matters little to him whether I have property or not. He will not depend upon my money to secure him an elevated position in society. His own skill and perseverance have already attained for him a high standing: of this I am often tempted to be proud; and perhaps it will be best for me to be robbed of that which might make me too independent in my feelings."

"If such are your feelings, my daughter, I will say no more. It is true, in assisting your brother, you will sacrifice the lesser good to the greater; besides, I shall have more reason to feel proud of my child than if she should have her house glittering with diamonds."

The next day Mr. Blake arrived: he had frequently visited Rosefield since the commencement of Susan's recovery had allowed him to leave her at all. He came not at this time with an expectation of taking her away with him; for as yet she was not able. He rejoiced at finding her improving in strength, and looked forward now to a time, not far distant, when he might hope she could become the light of his now vacant dwelling.

Susan sought an opportunity, soon after his arrival, to inform him of her wishes in regard to the disposal of a part of her property.

"Ma Felton," said she, "is afraid you will not concur in my plan: but I think, if I have rightly judged your character, that you will not oppose my wishes in proffering this token of gratitude to one who kindly gave me

his sympathy and protection in my hapless childhood; and to one, too, who took me into his family, and treated me in all respects as if I had been equal to them."

"You have rightly judged me, Susan. I will be rejoiced to have you present this friend even more than half the sum *now* at your control."

"I thank you," replied she with much emotion. "You have made me truly happy; and I can never feel sufficiently grateful for your generous kindness towards me."

"Indeed you can," replied Mr. Blake, smiling. "I am sure it would be a great unkindness in me to wish to debar you from this privilege. Is Mr. Felton in the house now?" he inquired.

"He is," answered Susan; "and, if you would like an introduction, I will present you to this friend with pleasure."

"Do so, then," said Mr. Blake. "I greatly desire his acquaintance."

Susan led the way to the back parlor, where Mr. Felton sat conversing with his mother; and, after introducing Mr. Blake, left them to seek Kate, who was engaged in sundry little matters of domestic interest in the kitchen.

"My dear sister," said she, addressing her, as she approached the table where Kate was employed, and seated herself beside it, "I am happy now in the hope of lightening the burdens of some who have been to me more than my natural guardians; so you must not say any thing more against the proposition I made last night."

"Does Mr. Blake approve of your plan?"

"Yes, most heartily. I have left him now, engaged in conversation with your mother and brother; for I felt

in haste to communicate this pleasant intelligence to you."

Maggie who had long been in the confidence of her mistress and family, was present at this time, and understood the meaning of what she had heard.

"I knowed well enough it would be so," said she. "Gentle folks what is gentle folks, and Christians besides, aint never small. I know I've seen enough of Mr. Blake to discover that he's as true a Christian bill as ever was current in this sinful world of ours; and I do rejoice, if Susan must leave us, that she is going away with such a friend to care for her."

"We are all glad," remarked Kate, "that her happiness is placed in the keeping of such a good man as Mr. Blake seems to be."

"When does Mr. Felton contemplate returning home?" asked Susan.

"He will not make his absence from home longer than is absolutely necessary," replied Kate; "and I think he may return in less than a week from this time."

"I would like to go to old Virginia with him; would not you, Kate?"

"Yes; that is, if we could go consistently."

There was still another who thought that a short visit to the South would be very pleasant just then; and this was Mr. Blake. This gentleman proposed taking Susan by easy stages to Groveton, that she might for a season enjoy the benefit of her native climate.

At first, this proposal appeared a wild scheme to Mrs. Felton; but at length she agreed to abide the decision of her physicians, as both Dr. Stonely and the doctor who

had attended Susan during her protracted illness were to be consulted. The letter that was sent to New York, asking Dr. Stonely's advice relative to the affair, was answered by him in person. He came, he said, not only to qualify himself to judge properly in such a case, but to see the brother of Kate.

Mr. Blake was in no haste to depart, and lingered as if he could not leave the spot. Mrs. Upton was visited by Mr. Felton. That lady, although apprised of his coming, was unable to command her feelings on seeing him. She wept violently for a short time, at the thought of the trials she had passed through since she had seen him. Kate, who accompanied her brother, strove to comfort her, by reminding her of the mercies she still enjoyed, and of the goodness of her heavenly Father in sparing to her for only a few years the blessing of a daughter such as her Mina had been.

"She is yours still, Mrs. Upton," said Kate; "and now you have one dear child in heaven. She would not exchange the society with which she now mingles for that of her dearest earthly friends."

"I believe this," was the mother's sad response. "Yet there are moments when a sense of the past overwhelms me. I regard myself as indirectly the means of Mina's early death."

"To what do you allude, Mrs. Upton?" inquired Kate.

"To my inexcusable neglect of her domestic education," replied the mother. "I seem to see Mina now, wearied with her fruitless attempts at housekeeping; and in fancy I often hear the painful sound of her young, sad voice,

bewailing her utter ignorance in regard to that which it was most useful for her to know. I did not then realize, as I do now, how these efforts to accomplish something for my comfort were undermining her health."

"I remember," answered Kate, "that Mina was very desirous to learn, whenever an opportunity was afforded her, every thing likely to be useful to her at a future day. Do not regret Mina's early removal from earth. You can profit from past experience, if it has been painful. I dare say Delia will be taught to do all that is ever of use for a woman to do."

"I do, indeed, intend to have Delia *educated*, — first usefully, and afterwards ornamentally."

"Say rather, Mrs. Upton, that the useful and ornamental shall go hand in hand throughout her education; for one need not be an obstacle in the way of the other," said Kate.

"I don't know but you are right, Miss Felton; but I have felt so disgusted at my former absurd notions, that there may be danger of going to an opposite extreme in trying to avoid past errors."

"That is very true," remarked Kate: "you need to guard against this danger; and I trust you will, and that your efforts to instruct Delia will be productive of much happiness both to yourself and her."

After the brother and sister left the house of this lady, they conversed, while on their way home, of the mutable nature of all things below the skies. Mr. Felton remarked, that, for one, he was glad things were not unchangeable; for there were often changes that improved not only people's conditions, but their characters.

"Is not this true," said he, "in the case of the friend we have just seen?"

"I think Mrs. Upton has been benefited greatly by means of her severe trials," responded Kate.

"She is wonderfully changed, certainly," said her brother; "and I admire the change. Just think what a haughty being she seemed when she was at our house in Groveton. No one then was pleased with her manners; now they are really pleasing to me. There is a subdued feeling manifested in her actions and conversation that is very lovely."

"Yes, John: the influence of grace operating upon the inward nature of either man or woman is ever a beautiful spectacle. Mrs. Upton is a changed character, — a lovely exhibition of the power of true religion upon the heart that is by nature totally opposed to all that is good."

CHAPTER XXIX.

"Dost thou live, man, dost thou live? — or only breathe and labor? Art thou free? or enslaved to a routine, — the daily machinery of habit?"

"The power of doing good to worthy objects is the only enviable circumstance in the lives of people of fortune."

When Mr. Felton became acquainted with the intentions of Susan in regard to himself, he was deeply affected at this expression of grateful affection on the part of one whom he had a few years previous regarded as too degraded to be reclaimed.

"I shall accept it," said he, "with thankfulness, — not as a debt, but as the generous offering of a grateful heart."

Susan was delighted at Mr. Felton's acceptance of her gift. Her physicians decided that a trip to Groveton would be likely to prove beneficial to her health.

"She must journey very slowly, however," said her physician in attendance. "There would be too much labor and excitement consequent upon rapid travelling for Susan's strength."

Dr. Stonely concurred in this opinion.

"Will Kate go with us?" asked Susan, hesitatingly; glancing at Dr. Stonely as she spoke, fancying that she might in his countenance read an answer to her question. And she did not look in vain. A smile of the kindest, brightest kind illumined his features, as he said, —

"She will be needed. I suppose," continued he, turning and addressing Kate, who had just entered the room, "that you will accompany your young friend here to Vir-

ginia, for a short season. We doctors have concluded that it will be advantageous to her health to take the journey, if she can be tenderly cared for while travelling by some gentle nurse like yourself."

"I will go with pleasure, if you think it best. But how long are we to remain?"

"Only long enough to escape the cold winds that we have still a right to look for at home. I shall hope to see you again by the first of June."

"Then you will not go with Miss Felton, father?" said Carrie, in an anxious tone.

"I cannot, my dear; but, if she would like *your* company, you may go with her."

"Certainly, Carrie must make one of our party," said both Kate and Susan. "It will be dull without her," added the former.

"I thank you! oh, I thank you!" exclaimed Carrie, with delight. "Let's see," said she, "there will be six of us, with Mrs. Felton and Mr. Blake."

"Mr. Blake cannot go," said that gentleman, who at the moment came in with an open letter in his hand. "This letter contains a summons for me to hasten to New York on business of the greatest importance. I would be so selfish now as to say to Susan, 'Don't go,' did I not know that Miss Felton would consent to accompany her."

"You have not asked me," said Kate, with a significant smile.

"I will now entreat you to go, and remain with Susan until she returns home again," said Mr. Blake, earnestly.

"Your entreaties are quite unnecessary, my good

friend," responded Kate; "for, if it is consistent, I shall go with her. And, even if you had not asked me, I should have gone."

"What strange people," said Carrie, laughing, "to get up an excursion without a wedding! I don't admire it. I want some weddings, or *marriages* at *least*, to come off first."

"We cannot always have our own way, my daughter," remarked her father. "Circumstances are opposed to our having a wedding at this time; and I see no way as good as that of accommodating ourselves to the circumstances."

Mrs. Felton remained at home, but would not be content until she had obtained a promise that Emma, if her health would permit, should spend the summer at the North. Very little preparation was necessary to fit the travelling party for their journey. They rested often, and were so long on the way that Mr. Felton wrote home again to quiet the fears of his family in regard to his prolonged absence.

When it was known at Groveton that Kate and Susan were on their way thither, the expressions of joy made by the different members of the household were almost boisterous. Old Ruthy tried in vain to quiet these noisy demonstrations.

"Ye musn't do so," said she. "Yer may be dis-'pointed yet, for there's no knowin' what may happen before they can git here. I want ye to be still, an' thankful to the good Lord for the blessin' of bein' 'lowed to stay here, and not be selled off. 'Pears like I can't thank him enough for't."

"It seems that your impression was right, Ruthy," re-

marked Mrs. Felton. "You said that you thought Miss Kate would come to see us before long."

"La yes, missus! so I did; but I never thought dat she'd done start right off, an' come. I'se grad, indeed I is, that she's comin'; I longs to see her, an' talk ter her 'bout my Lucy. I was a gwine ter say *poor girl*, but den she ain't poor, onyhow now; it's only me what's poor."

As Mr. Felton had not informed his wife just when to expect them, the day of their arrival was uncertain; they were looked for, though somewhat doubtfully, for several days before they reached the place. The coachman went repeatedly to the house where the stage stopped, and returned with the carriage vacant.

At length, one afternoon, when all were wearied with expectation, Jake ran into the house, exclaming, —

"I sees de carriage, missus, an' dere's ladies in it too. They's come now, I knows they has;" and in the fullness of his spirits he clapped his hands, and jumped up and down for joy. His joyousness was contagious, and soon was communicated to all on the plantation; and the people, in eager haste to catch a glimpse of the friends they loved, formed themselves into two lines, and stood on either side of the path that led from the front gate to the veranda. The heads of the men and boys were uncovered; and, as soon as the occupants of the carriage were near enough to hear it, the blacks commenced singing a song of welcome, in their own peculiar style. This demonstration of affection, coming right from the heart, could not fail to move the feelings of those to whom it was addressed. Its wild pathos reached a tender chord, that vibrated to the touch; and tears filled the eyes of the

whole party, as they alighted from the carriage, and walked to the house, greeting the people with affectionate kindness as they passed along.

"De Lord bress ye, Miss Kate, an' Miss Susan too, for comin'!" said Ruthy, who was standing upon the veranda, as they came up the steps.

Sylvia and Meeta stood back a little, and by joyous smiles evinced their happiness at again meeting these friends.

Susan's health had evidently improved during her journey, and she was prepared to hail each familiar object with delight. It was not long before Mr. Felton communicated to his people the fact that Susan had claimed the privilege of advancing part of the sum needed to prevent the sale of the place. He thought this statement due, not only to justice and humanity, but to religion and benevolence. He felt, moreover, that a knowledge of what Susan had become might encourage others to relieve the distresses of the poor and degraded, with a hope that they might, by kindness, be raised and re-assured.

"Now yer see," said Ruthy, "how right it was for Miss Kate ter take sich care o' Susan. What a bressing it was for us all, too! I declar I'se dat 'shamed ter think I ever felt so hateful like towards der dear, sweet chile."

Carrie, who was welcomed for the sake of her friends, wondered at many remarks she heard made in regard to Susan's former position; but she waited to be alone with Kate, before asking any questions. She had never been at the South before, and the manners and customs of the people were new to her. She enjoyed much that she saw, but was most of all delighted in listening to the

many praises that fell from the lips of all the servants, which were bestowed upon Kate.

Kate did not gratify Carrie's curiosity in regard to Susan, but Susan herself gave her the information she so much desired; and proud, too, was she to reflect credit upon her benefactress, by telling what she had done for her. Carrie admired, not only the narration, but the narrator, of these pleasing facts.

"I don't, after all, believe that you *can* love Miss Felton better than I," was her earnest reply to Susan's account of the kindness she had received at her friend's hands. "I am glad you are getting well, for your own sake; but I must confess that I am quite as glad for mine, because, the sooner your health returns, the sooner Miss Felton will become my mother."

Not many days after these visitors arrived at Groveton, Mrs. Felton's niece, formerly known as Miss Abbott, went to visit the plantation, with her husband. Mrs. Armstrong's attachment to her friends had in no wise abated. She was overjoyed at finding herself once more surrounded by those whom she loved next to her own dearest relatives.

"I am most agreeably surprised at finding you and Susan here," she said to Kate. "I was intending to visit you at the North this summer."

"You may accompany us home on the first of June," replied Kate; "and our being here will only enable us to be more in each other's society. It need be no obstacle in the way of your visiting Rosefield; we should like your company there very much, I assure you."

"I have heard tales about you, Kate, that I suspect are true," said Julia.

"Perhaps you have heard some truths: I hope so, at any rate; for there are some items I feel quite willing you should learn without my telling you."

"I can imagine what you would like communicated, and I am rejoiced that there is a kindred spirit, likely to cheer and radiate your pathway through life. Kate, I need not ask if this gentleman sympathizes with you, in your plans of benevolence; for I am sure you could not like a person who did not."

"You do not mean exactly so, Julia. I hope, at least, that I have not given you the impression that there are any that I do not like."

"No! I only mean that you could not prefer a partner for life, that was not noble and liberal."

Emma's health did not improve, as her friends had hoped. The anxiety she had suffered had retarded her recovery greatly. Her mother could scarcely become reconciled to the idea of parting with her for a season, to allow her to visit the North.

"Do not think of parting, Martha," said Kate; "but go with her, and take Frank with you."

Mr. Felton approved this plan, and encouraged his wife to make preparations for accompanying their friends home to Rosefield. Mrs. Felton consented.

"'Pears 's though I can't like anyhow ter have yer all go," said Ruthy.

"You need not be left behind, Ruthy," said Kate. "Emma will need you, and will hardly know how to do without you."

"Bress your kind heart, Miss Kate! It'll be sich a comfort ter dis sher lonesome heart o' mine ter go whar

yer live, an' be near yer so long. I thanks the Lord for bringin' things 'bout so't I can go. But will yer leave Sylvia an' Meeta behind?"

"I will see. I don't know as yet what will be done about it. Perhaps they may not wish to go; we must find out."

"I knows well 'nough dat they both are 'specting or wantin' ter live wid yer when yer gits married; an' now dat dey's heered yer's goin' ter be, they'll feel as if dey must. O dear Miss Kate! I'm glad like ter have yer made happy by changin' yer condition; but I'se sorry ye can't spend no more winters here. I wishes I could live near ye and all yer family. Yer's made us all happy by yer comin'."

"I have not done much," replied Kate, "not half as much as I wish I could, for the comfort of those around me. I feel that I am purposing to do something; and yet time passes away, and leaves me feeling dissatisfied that I have done so little."

"Yer make me feel 'shamed now, for I hasn't done half what I mighter."

"I don't know about that, Ruthy. I believe, according to your ability, you have done quite as much. Since I have known you, I believe you have always been ready to sacrifice your own comfort for that of others when it was necessary. I am not certain but that you have done more than I, all things considered."

"Oh, don't now, say that! I can't bar that, no how. 'Twas ye that first telled me that I orter not ter 'spise the poor whites. I allers thought they wasn't fit ter speak to, 'till ye showed me dat they was jist like us. O Missee

Kate! I can tell ye ef ev'rybudy in dis sher world was like ye, 'twould be a world wuth livin' in."

"We will pray, Ruthy, that all the world may become better than we are, — that they may take our Redeemer for a pattern."

"Amen!" devoutly responded the good old woman.

Kate, by conversing with Sylvia and Meeta, became satisfied that they were anxiously expecting the time to come when they should be taken to the North to live with herself.

"You are indebted to others beside myself," said Kate, "for your freedom. Mrs. Felton gave money to assist in purchasing Meeta."

"I knows dat ar very well; an' she has allers been kind to her, an' me too: but yer mother gin somethin', Ruthy said, an' dat other lady dat was here, bress her dear young soul!"

"Yes: my mother helped to free Meeta, and so did Miss Winthrop; and yet you seem to give me the whole credit."

"Well, Missee Kate, didn't ye go an' make the bargin, and pay more'n half the money yerself. Ye had the courage, and went right on an' did what I'se afeered ye wouldn't dare ter do. I loves odders for helpin'; but, ef it hadn't been for ye, Meeta 'ud a been selled right off ter the trader. Then, too, yer helped me ter git my freedom; yer did that all yerself. Ye hired me, an' paid me wages to me ole massa, an' put more to't besides; an' then ye gin me clothes while I worked for yer brother. An' I'm sure ye ought ter have me yerself."

"I will see about this matter. I would like to take you home with me, and Meeta also."

"Thank ye, missus," said the woman.

Kate immediately consulted her brother and sister in regard to this affair.

"Of course we expect you to have these servants, Kate," was their reply.

It was soon well known upon the plantation that Sylvia and her daughter were going to live in New York with Kate after she was married. These women, too, learned the fact that Carrie, with her laughing eyes and curling hair, was to make one of Kate's family.

Carrie was well pleased with the idea of having southern help to take home with them, and asked Kate if it was probable they would be contented in New York.

"We cannot know until they have been there a while," replied Kate.

"Every thing will be very strange to them at first," remarked Carrie. "New York is so very different from a plantation."

"This is true; but there is one thing in that city that will be very pleasant to Sylvia, and Meeta too; that is, they will be where they can go to meeting oftener than they can here. This privilege will make them love New York very much, I think."

CHAPTER XXX.

"Who, then, should fear the face of man, when God hath answered prayer? I speak it, not in arrogance of heart, but humbly, as of justice; I think it, not in vanity of soul, but tenderly, for gratitude."

The first of June arrived, bringing with it much that was grateful in aromatic breezes and choice flowers. Our friends need not linger longer at Groveton, and they prepared to depart. Kate was urged by all, with tearful eyes, to visit them again.

"Ye won't forgit us, will ye, Miss Kate, now you're goin' ter be married an' live in that city?" said Jake.

"Yer won't, shall ye? I knows ye won't!" exclaimed Jim.

"No, indeed: I shall never, never forget you, my friends, but shall always feel interested in your highest good," replied Kate.

"We knows you'll think on us all, Miss Kate," said one after another, whose tones betrayed deep emotion.

"An' we'll keep the presents ye made us long as we live, ter remember yer by," said Jake.

Kate had given each and all of the servants a little memento of her regard. To those who were able to read she gave a Bible, or some other book; to others, some article of dress. She felt assured that these people were for the present contented, under the control of her brother; for he was kind. Yet she well knew that there was not one on that large plantation that did not dread the thought that this master might die, and leave them in a condition that would to them be far worse than death.

"I wish," said Mr. Felton to his sister, as she was on the eve of her departure from Groveton, "that all my people were free. Even should they choose to leave me, it would annoy me less to be left alone than does the thought that I am now responsible for them in every sense, — not only in regard to their condition, but their character."

The recent trials of Mr. Felton had caused him to think upon the painful liabilities of people in bondage as he had never before done.

"I sympathize strongly in the feelings you have expressed," replied Kate. "Would that your people could be emancipated at once! but that cannot be. Still you can labor, and wait for such an event by-and-by as the result of your labors. God is the hearer of prayer. He can open a path in this wilderness of means to bring about this end. We must pray for guidance, and, at the same time, do all we can to secure the well-being of those who look to us, not only for precept and example, but for the necessaries of life. Let me entreat you, my brother," she continued, with emotion, "never to part with any of your people unless they desire to leave you."

"I pledge my honor that I will not," responded he.

"I have reason to trust in a prayer-hearing God," remarked Kate; "and by faith I can now look forward with pleasure to a time when you will be free from the scourge of slavery, the shackles of which are as heavy for you as for your bondmen."

"It is even so; and I rejoice that you have faith in my liberation from this conventional thraldom."

With these feelings the brother and sister parted.

The time that Kate and the rest of the party were away

seemed long to those left at Rosefield; also to two gentlemen in New York, notwithstanding almost every waking moment was, with the latter, devoted to business. The fond, maternal heart of Mrs. Felton went out after her children, as she termed all the young ladies. She commended them to Him who alone could preserve them alive, and return them to her embrace; yet she could not know that it was his will to do this. Many had been stricken down by the wayside while travelling, where the Angel of Death ever hovers near; and her dear ones might be suddenly called from earth while absent from their home. She was gladdened by cheerful missives from Kate and Susan, and even Carrie; for this dear girl, Mrs. Felton said, was almost as near to her as the others.

One evening, during the first week of June, Maggie was passing through the hall, with the intention of ascending the stairs, to put the chambers, as she said, in an airy condition for the loved ones, who she felt sure would be there soon, when her steps were arrested by Carrie. So joyous was this lively girl to find herself again in Rosefield, that she could not wait until the rest of the party had time to ascend the steps, but hastened to surprise, if possible, the inmates of the dwelling, who had not heard their carriage as it approached.

"Blessings on your young head!" exclaimed Maggie. "I never was so thankful afore in my life. I declare, — Miss Kate, Mrs. Felton, Frank, and Miss Emma, too! ain't it nice?" continued she, as she saw them all before her.

Mrs Felton had by this time reached the hall. The baggage of the travellers was brought in and deposited,

by Jacob, up stairs, who, as he carried it along, expressed his joy at seing the dear young ladies at home. Mrs. Felton's heart was too full for many words on this occasion. A feeling of devout gratitude was felt by her, for being permitted to see her daughters returned in safety, and all now in perfect health.

"Now that you are at home again, and have brought these other dear ones with you, I feel glad that you went," said she; "but your absence has been trying to my feelings."

Mrs. Armstrong did not accompany her friends to New England, but followed them in about a week after they had reached Rosefield. Mrs. Marshly also joined the happy circle at that place, accompanied by her husband, soon after.

"I am rejoiced to see you, although the pleasure is very unexpected," said Kate to Mary, as she welcomed her back to the old home-like place.

"You might have expected me. Did you think I could stay away from you after learning the fact that you were about to be married, and I not make one of your wedding guests? No, Kate, I could not allow things to go on so; therefore I have hurried my husband to prepare for this trip to dear good old Rosefield."

"Have you been homesick at 'Fairy Dell,' Mary? or do you continue to feel at home on the prairie in Illinois?" inquired Mrs. Felton of her young friend, whom she rejoiced at again beholding.

"I have never felt homesick," replied Mrs. Marshly, with animation; "for, notwithstanding my attachment to this place, which must ever be great, I feel that the West

has by far the greatest claim upon my affectionate regard. My husband's interests centre there, at least measurably so; besides, I find it pleasant to minister to the comfort of those around me, and all too who are within my reach. Perhaps I could not be contented if I was not able to hold frequent intercourse with my friends in New England. I often think of the first emigrants to what was called West, some sixty years since. How much they must have endured by way of privation, to say nothing of hardship and toil! How much of the time they were in ignorance of the condition of the friends from whom they were separated!

"It took a long time for a letter from those left behind to reach them, and then they were obliged to pay eight times as much as we now pay for their letters. When I compare their slow mode of travelling with the lightning speed of the present day, and realize, as I do I think in a small degree, my advantages over these indubitable spirits of the last century, I feel quite ashamed to think it a cross to live in the lovely retirement of 'Fairy Dell.'"

"We are not likely to live in retirement much longer," said Mr. Marshly; "for there is a railroad in contemplation, that will bring other places near us. The rails will be laid along for some distance, in sight of our place."

"Will this road be extended as far as the place where father lives?" asked Susan, eagerly.

"It will be within five miles of his place," replied Mr. Marshly.

"That distance will not make a long drive," remarked Kate. "I love to hear of the annihilation of space between friends."

"Susan," said Mary, "I will like to plan for *you*. Will you let me? or rather will you follow the suggestion I would like to make?"

"I shall not be able to inform you, until I know what it is you would propose," replied Susan.

"It is merely that you make an excursion to the West after your marriage, stop with me as long as you possibly can, and then visit your parents at Woodville. That is," she added, "if you intend or wish to introduce your refined husband to a backwoods log-farmhouse. I hope you do."

"Certainly I intend to ask Mr. Blake to visit my relatives, soon after we are married. If they *are* rough and poor, they are morally good *now*, and I am not ashamed of them. Mr. Blake has more than once expressed a desire to take me to see them; but I am afraid he will not think my health sufficiently firm to admit of my travelling over those western roads at present."

"A little jolting will not injure you by-and-by, Susan," said Mrs. Felton, who had entered the room in time to hear her last remark.

"So I think, Ma Felton; and I hope you will persuade Mr. Blake to be of the same opinion."

"I am well aware," replied that lady, "that it is Mr. Blake's wish that you should visit Woodville. He is delighted with the course you have pursued relative to your family; and more than once I have heard him say, that, by your conduct towards them, you had exalted yourself in his esteem. He has left it with yourself to name the day for your marriage, I believe; has he not, dear?"

"He has," was Susan's reply.

"Dr. Stonely also asks Kate to do the same," said Mrs. Felton, "and I suggest that you all spend the remainder of this summer with me. Let the weddings take place early in the month of September. All parties can then go to New York in company, where a part of us will remain, while the others go farther. Susan can accompany Mr. Marshly and his lady to the West. It will be a charming excursion at that season, as we know from experience. Our southern friends, I am sure, will be induced to agree to this plan, as far as themselves are concerned."

"I think Mr. Marshly will also concur in it," said Mary. "For myself, I like it very much; what say you, Kate and Susan?"

"I am satisfied," said Kate; "as mother implies, in what she has said, a willingness to go to New York and stop with me. Am I right in this inference, mother?"

"Yes, my daughter. As it was left with me to arrange matters relative to our future homes, I have taken it upon me to decide to spend the cold season of the year in New York. In the meantime, we will keep the good old home here for a residence during warm weather. I hope this plan will please Dr. Stonely, for I will not ask you to spend all the time with me here. That would be unjust and selfish. I expect only that you and Carrie will make a long visit at Rosefield during each summer; and sometimes, perhaps, the doctor can come, and accompany you home."

"Maggie will go with you, mother, I trust," said Kate.

"She has begged the privilege already, and I have promised that she shall not be left behind when we go," answered her mother.

"Mrs. Upton thinks she shall be very lonely," said Carrie, "when we are all away."

"I suppose she will; but we shall not be absent all the time," replied Kate.

"How changed this lady is!" remarked Mrs. Armstrong. "I declare I shall never despair any more of ugly persons changing for the better. I like her now; but I detested her when I knew her in Groveton."

"It is the influence of the Holy Spirit upon her heart that has made her lovely," said Kate, "and that alone. I love to see her: she reminds me of the fact that nothing is too hard for God to do."

The gentlemen in New York were informed of the plan proposed by Mrs. Felton, and both were ready to adopt it. Mr. Blake said he should invite himself to spend the dull part of the summer at Rosefield; but Dr. Stonely was likely to be most busy during that time, so that he could not have the pleasure of being with these friends until September. He approved of the plan that kept Kate and Carrie away from him during the season when the city was least healthful; for, much as he desired their company, he could not ask Kate to leave the genial atmosphere of her native place during the summer.

Preliminaries being settled, a spirit of contentment pervaded the dwelling where these loving friends were congregated. Maggie, who from the moment of their arrival had felt friendly towards Ruthy, Sylvia, and Meeta, indulged her loquacity in giving a description of what they might expect to meet with if they remained at the North. She gave a glowing description of the kindnesses that had ever been shown her by the family, with whom she had lived many years.

"And it's not me alone that's been treated good, but all the servants that have ever worked here. Miss Kate'll be givin' you some thing every little while to help you lay up your wages. I know she will."

"Will Missee Kate pay us wages?" asked Meeta, in astonishment.

"To be sure she will. Why, what does the child think to ask such a question?"

"I thinks I'se willin' ter work for her as long as I lives," answered the girl.

"An' so is I," said Sylvia.

"Miss Kate won't let you stay and work in her house without paying you good wages; nor Dr. Stonely neither. He is like her, good to everybody that behaves themselves. And them that don't he tries to make right; and he tries a long while too, afore he gives up any poor critter that he knows, I can tell you."

The servants all concluded that they were fortunate in being placed by Providence among those who feared and loved their heavenly Father.

"If I lives longer'n missus and Emma does, I shall want ter go where Missee Kate lives," said Ruthy. "An' 'pears ter me that massa won't allers have a plantation an' people; though I heered him promise Missee Kate that he never'd sell one o' the hands on the place, an' I knows he'll done keep that promise, too, well 'nough. 'Pears ter my mind dere'll be some way work round ter free the people. The good Lord has many ways ter do things that we knows nothin' of, ye see."

"I know that," said Maggie. "He will answer prayer *sometimes*, when we think he's forgot all about us, and what

we prayed for. We will all pray," she continued, "that slavery may be done away on earth; and we can hope our prayers will be answered."

"Amen!" responded the others; "amen ter dat!"

The summer faded away; and September came, with its wealth of fruit and its pleasant atmosphere, to scatter cheerfulness all around. Its arrival was greeted with pleasure by all the inmates of Mrs. Felton's mansion. Carrie, dear, affectionate, lively Carrie, hailed it with unbounded joy. She almost flew about the premises, making herself useful whenever and however she might. Beautiful autumn flowers were gathered by her hands, to fill many vases that were placed in the different rooms; while from the conservatory she culled the sweetest and fairest exotics to adorn the parlors.

One beautiful white rose-bush she had watched carefully for many a week. It had for some time been covered with buds; and now these buds had expanded, Carrie said, just in time to grace the heads of the two brides.

"You will let me dress your hair this evening, Kate?" asked she, on the morning preceding the bridal evening; "and you too, Susan: for I cannot be refused."

"I will employ you as hairdresser, Carrie, if you will arrange my hair as plainly as I wish," replied Kate.

"I promise the same," said Susan.

"Well, I have the vanity to believe that I can suit you both," responded Carrie; "so hold yourselves in readiness to submit to my wishes this P.M."

Dr. Stonely and Mr. Blake travelled together in the earliest conveyance from their city that could reach Rosefield, and arrived at about three o'clock that afternoon.

The weather was delightful: the sun went down in glorious grandeur, and the evening was beautiful in its serene moonlight; while myriads of glittering stars added their effulgence to increase its loveliness.

The invited guests were all assembled precisely at the hour appointed for the ceremony, which was eight o'clock. The man of God came, and the bridal party entered the room before he had seated himself; and, to the joy of all, these two couples, who were so dear to all present, were united by him in the holy bonds of wedlock. Never did brides appear more beautiful. Their attire was rich, yet simple in its plain neatness. Carrie proved herself a tasteful hairdresser. The hair of her friends she arranged in a simple style becoming to them. Nature had given to both glossy curls; and Carrie placed a beautiful white rose, with a half-expanded bud, on the left side of the head of each. This was all the head-dress they wore.

After the ceremony had been performed, and most present had saluted the brides, Carrie approached them. After kissing both brides and bridegrooms, she exclaimed, —

"I am so thankful you are married at last, that I can hardly express my gratitude and delight."

"I hope that many years will be granted you to manifest your thankfulness," said the venerable man who had just pronounced them man and wife.

"I wish you and your bride were to belong to our party during the whole of our excursion to 'Fairy Dell,'" said Mr. Marshly to Dr. Stonely, on the morning after the weddings. "It is too bad that you cannot allow yourself time even for a wedding-tour."

"We shall make something of a tour in going to New

York," said Kate. "I shall be satisfied with that, for the doctor's business is of more importance than pleasure. His time is sacred to humanity."

"The sick may not be neglected with impunity," remarked the doctor; "and I find it difficult to leave my patients, even for a few days."

"You will not confine yourself and Kate to that closely packed city all your life, I hope," said Mrs. Marshly.

"I do not intend to do exactly that, my dear friend," answered the doctor. "Mrs. Stonely shall go wherever she pleases, and I will accompany her as often as duty will permit."

"You may be assured, Mary, that I shall suffer no wrong," answered her friend. "I trust that duty and pleasure will go hand in hand in my experience. Yet sometimes I almost tremble when I think of the responsibility that will rest upon me on becoming a resident of a large city."

CHAPTER XXXI.

"How much more glorious a character is that of the friend of mankind than that of the conqueror of nations!"

"All may mend; and sympathies are healing, and reason has its influence with the worst. And in those worst is ample hope, if only thou have charity and faith."

After the arrival of the bridal party in New York, the friends who were on their way to parts more distant resolved to accept the invitation of Dr. Stonely and lady to spend at least one day at their house before proceeding farther. At first, Mrs. Felton refused to listen to the suggestion of stopping even for one night: but a sudden revulsion took place in her feelings while riding up Broadway; for she there espied her husband, who was so busily engaged in conversation with a gentleman that he did not see the carriage in which his family were sitting, until it had stopped near him, and he heard himself addressed.

"I am glad to meet you thus," he said to his friends, 'for to-morrow I was intending to start for Rosefield. Business of importance called me unexpectedly to this city just at this juncture; and, though my time is limited here, I could not go home without my family."

After accompanying the whole party to the house of Dr. Stonely, Mrs. Felton readily yielded to the solicitations of friends, and concluded to stop for at least one day in the city.

Everything in the neat and elegant house on Fourteenth

Street had been arranged for the reception of the bride and her friends by Mrs. Fielding, who possessed much of that kind of taste needful for one who should superintend the furnishing of superb apartments. Kate had gladly accepted the proffered kindness of this friend to attend to matters of purchasing, and seeing placed in the rooms, any articles of furniture that were to be bought. She was not so particular as to suffer one moment's anxiety lest every little item in these arrangements should not suit her own taste. She scarcely gave the subject a thought. Sylvia and Meeta had preceded their mistress to her new home. They would like to see her married, they said, at leaving Rosefield; but should see her for many a year, they hoped, after she was married, and that would be a great deal better.

Meeta said she knew how Miss Kate would like her rooms adjusted, and she should tell the ladies who presided if things were not ordered just right. Kate gave her, at that time, a note to Mrs. Fielding; and the kind-hearted, grateful girl felt proud as she accompanied her mother on this journey to the Empire City. Meeta's smiling face was the first that greeted her mistress, as that lady entered her new habitation. She stood back in the hall, arrayed in her best apparel, and waiting, with respectful deference, for an opportunity to tell dear Mrs. Stonely, as she now called her, how glad she was that she could now live with her, and labor for her comfort.

Kate returned the greetings of all her friends with affectionate kindness, as she met them in the hall; and it was not long before she found her way to the spot where were standing the two faithful women whom she had been

instrumental in saving from bondage. She shook hands with both of them, and thanked them for their heartfelt congratulations.

"I'se glad ye sent us along fust," said Sylvia, "'cause we's needed sure."

"That we was," interrupted Meeta. "'Pears like these folks didn't begin ter know yer ways, Missee Kate, — Missus Stonely, I means."

"Well," answered Kate, "you at least know just how I want things done, and I am glad. But the others did what they thought would please me, no doubt; and one must accept a generous intention as an action, sometimes."

"Yes, missus," replied the young woman, courtesying as she spoke.

Kate and her friends were convinced, by the appointments of her table for supper on that night, that there were some in the house who understood her wishes. Meeta was delighted as she met the approving glances of those she cared most to please, while assisting her mother to tend the table. During supper a conversation was commenced by Mrs. Felton, which was continued until a late hour in the evening, and was then finished by a promise from Mr. Felton to allow his wife to spend the warm season at the North.

"I dare not promise to grant your request to liberate my people," said he; "but I will promise to think seriously upon the subject."

"Mother," said Kate the next day, when they were by themselves, "I do believe John is thinking seriously about coming to this city to engage in business."

"I hope you are right in your conjecture," replied Mrs. Felton; "for, if he should do so, I could not only have his family with me during the warm seasons, but his slaves would all be made free in that case. He will not promise any thing more than that he will think upon the subject; but even that is something."

"It is a great deal, I feel," replied her mother. "John will not think long without being convinced, by reflection, that it will be wise for him to do as we proposed last evening. But we will wait and hope."

Julia Armstrong and her husband were the first of this circle of pleasant visitors who left Dr. Stonely's. She obtained a promise from her host and his lady that they would visit her home in South Carolina.

"I wish very much," said she, "that you could see just how we are getting along in our attempts at reforming the degraded, and instructing the ignorant. Our progress is slow; still, something is being done. The lever is beginning to move the lump of prejudice that has so long laid heavy against the wheels of philanthropic exertion in behalf of poor whites. One may now make an effort to do good to this class of our fellow-creatures, without being termed insane."

"I rejoice to learn the fact that you and Mr. Armstrong are like to make this world better for your living in it," said Kate. "If we do not agree with each other in our theory on all points, I trust we disagree less in our practice, and shall continue to do so."

"I suppose," said Mr. Armstrong, good-naturedly, "that Mrs. Stonely is expecting, that, before many years, I shall change my opinions in regard to slavery; but she

will find herself mistaken. I imagine we shall never see eye to eye in regard to that subject."

"Do not be too confident," answered Kate, with a pleasant smile. "Every thing is possible, and you may think differently. I trust your opinions are not like the laws of the Medes and Persians."

"Time will show," said Mr. Armstrong, as he warmly grasped the hand of this friend at parting.

Julia said she should be willing to free all the people, if her husband thought best to do so. She parted from her friends declaring that her prejudices against northern fanaticism had given place to a feeling of respect towards those whom she now felt had been misjudged by the South.

Mr. Felton's family was the next to depart.

"You shall soon know the result of my reflections," said Mr. Felton to his mother, as he bade her adieu. The parting of Ruthy with her friends was affecting, yet not sadly so.

"I hopes I can cum agin some time," said she, as she kissed the hand of Kate; "an' 'pears like it will be so massa'll come too. I used ter think the northerners was drefful somehow; but, now I knows um, I likes um. They are as good as our folks ter hum, I'm sure; an' I'm glad Missee Kate ever went ter her brudder's."

"I expect I shall see you at the North again," said Kate to this affectionate old woman, as she shook hands with her.

"I hope you will," was the earnest reply.

Kate presented Susan with a sum of money to give her parents, saying to her at the same time that she presumed

her benevolence towards Mr. Felton would prevent her doing as she might wish towards them.

"You have misjudged on that point, my friend," answered Susan. "I have determined to give them the same amount that I should have done had your brother refused to accept a single penny. Some may consider me wanting in filial duty because I gave more to another than I offer my father. Yet it is not because I do not desire to promote his best good I do this; but because I think a small portion received by him annually will benefit the family more than a large sum now."

"You are right in this, Susan; and I am glad to know that you are at liberty to do as you please towards your parents. But you will allow me as a friend to send them some slight present in token of my kind remembrance, will you not?"

"Oh, certainly! but let it be something beside money. Mr. Blake will have any thing transported that you will wish to send," replied Susan.

"Then I will buy some articles of clothing that cannot be as easily procured where they live as in this city," said Kate.

This resolution was no sooner made than acted upon. Many little items for household comfort, and others for dress, were soon purchased and carefully packed, to be carried to those for whom Kate felt an increasing interest as years rolled on. So true it is that the very act of conferring favors endears the recipients of them to their benefactors.

Susan started upon this tour with feelings of delight; and, as she drew near her journey's end, she remarked to

the companions of her way that she had often imagined scenes of happiness in which she was an actor, but never any so replete with pleasure as that in which she had been permitted to mingle during the last few months of her life. Her visit to her parents was very pleasant. Their hearts were gladdened by her offerings, and those of their friend Mrs. Stonely.

On hearing that their "Miss Felton" was married, and that her prospects for the future were bright with promise of good to many, Mr. Wilkins exclaimed, —

"Oh, I wish that the world was full of such women as she!"

"There would be no room for suffering in that case my friend," remarked Mr. Blake.

"True enough, there wouldn't," responded the latter; "but I have reason to bless God that she has known my family."

"And so, also, have I," answered Mr. Blake, with deep feeling.

After spending a few weeks with their different friends at the West, Mr. Blake and his wife returned to New York, and took up their abode in the beautiful mansion that Carrie Stonely had playfully expressed a wish to visit, and find Susan its mistress.

"You will now be able to run up those marble steps, and ring at the door of Mr. Blake's house, Carrie," said Kate one day to this lively girl. "You were impatient at one time to do this, I believe," she added, with an affectionate smile.

"I remember what I said about it that night Uncle John came. You need not laugh, for he is my uncle," said

Carrie, as she saw a smile beaming upon the face of her new mother.

"I am pleased to think it is so," remarked Mrs. Stonely. But, tell me, when will you call upon Susan?"

"Whenever my *mother* will accompany me," was Carrie's affectionate reply, as she playfully kissed Kate, and ran out of the room.

Mr. Felton did not keep his New York friends long in suspense relative to the course he intended to pursue with his people. He soon wrote to them, and we will venture to make a few extracts from his letter.

"I have," he wrote, "thought long upon the subject of manumitting my slaves. I have consulted the wishes of each one of them, and have ascertained that their feelings are in favor of taking care of themselves. Jake and Jim plead earnestly to be permitted to go to your city, and work for Kate or Susan. I have comforted them by a promise to tell you this, which I need not say is now fulfilled. I have, too, promised to employ as many of my people as I can possibly afford to in New York, as thither I have concluded to go and engage in business. Some have friends in Canada, and I ask your assistance in finding places for those that have not. I shall help to reach that place all that wish to go there, for I cannot send them out into a world of which they are measurably ignorant. I stand in the place of a guardian to these souls, who have for years done my bidding; and I must watch over them, at least for a time."

This letter was read with delight by all Dr. Stonely's family. Mrs. Felton proposed to her son, in a letter that was written immediately after his missive was read by her,

to hire several of the servants herself, and keep them until they could be sure of other good homes.

Kate requested her brother to tell Jake that she wanted him in her own house. Jim, she was sure, would be employed by Mr. Blake. Other friends would like several of the other servants; and it would be easy to find places for all.

Mrs. Felton closed her letter by saying that she was glad he was about to prove his regard for his people by his care for their comfort.

"Be assured, my son," said she, "that your kindness to the least deserving among them will not be exerted in vain."

"Now," said Kate to her mother, after this letter was dispatched to the post-office, "you will not be likely to be left alone at Rosefield, at any time; for Martha and Emma and Frank will probably spend much of their time with you."

"I think," answered Mrs. Felton, "that it will be Martha's wish to reside with me in the old homestead constantly. She does not like city life, and I am sure John will spare her from their home in the city, during the warm season."

"How many blessings are ours!" said Kate, thoughtfully.

"Very many," responded her mother; "and humility and gratitude become us."

"I am so delighted," said Carrie, who for a short time had been a silent listener to the conversation of her friends, "to know that Emma's home is to be so near us, that I can hardly find words to express my joy. Yet the

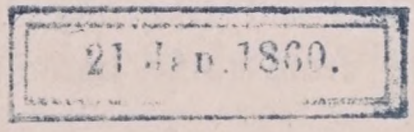
thought of this is not as pleasant to me as is the sweet reality that my new mother's home and mine are now one."

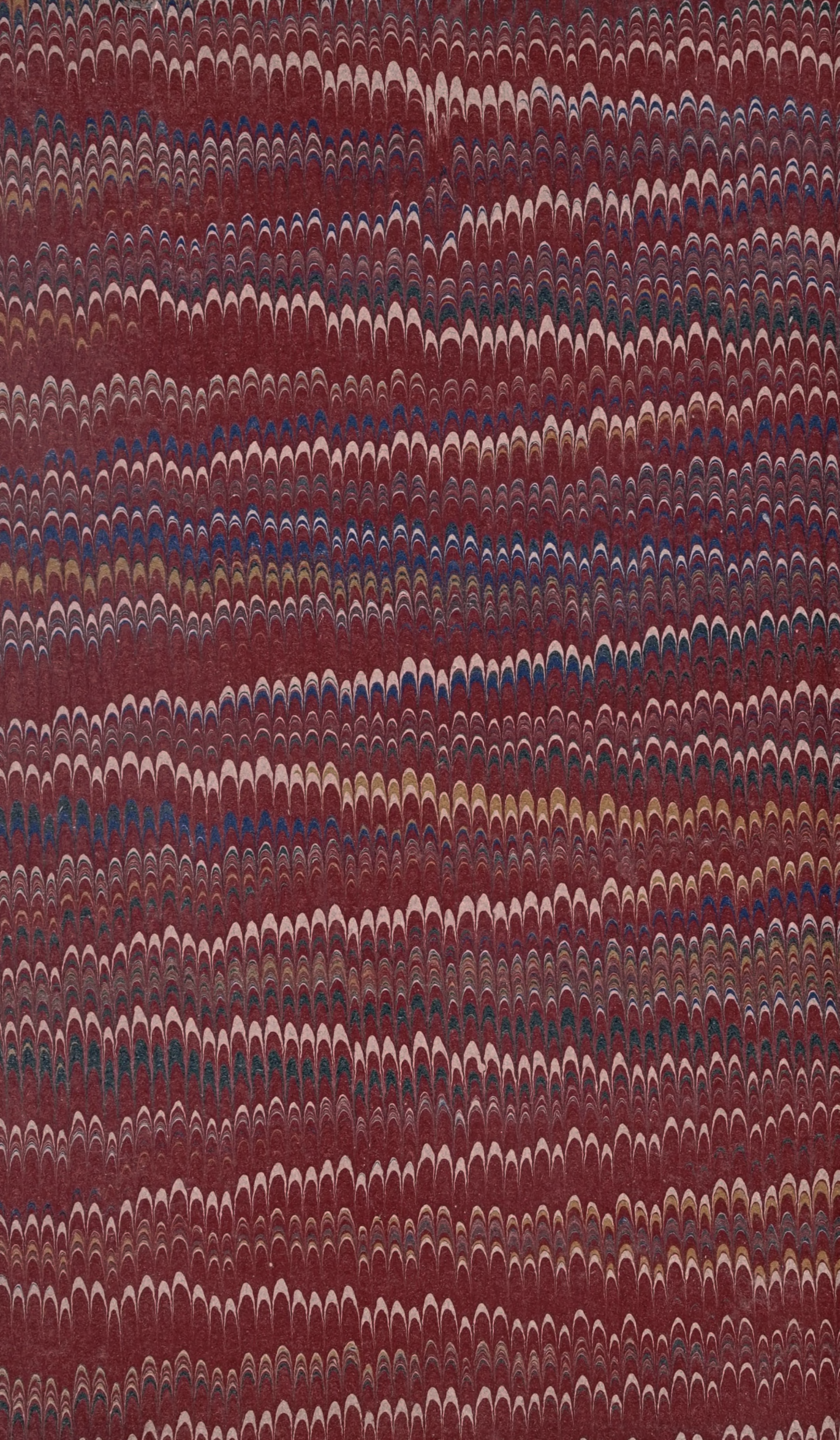
As she said this, she encircled Kate's neck with her arm, and imprinted a kiss of affection upon her cheek.

"Take care, Carrie," said Mrs. Felton, "don't make an idol of your new mother; remember she is only mortal.

"I know that," replied the affectionate girl. "But she is always doing something to make one love her; so that I cannot help doing so, if I would."

THE END.





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